READING TABLE MATERIAL
REDEEMER UNIVERSITY COLLEGE
LIBRARY
JUN 2 4 2004
PM# 40009999 R9375

LIBRARY REDEEMER COLLEGE
777 GARNER RD E
ANCASTER ON L9K 1J4
Dec 2004

CHRISTIAN COURIER

June 21, 2004 A Reformed Biweekly No. 2743 $1.60

D-Day and "the greatest generation"....p.12

Our Father in Heaven...p.14

59th year of publication

Hindu militants in India continue reconversion campaign

Joshua Newton

DELHI (Compass) – India's extremist Hindu organization, the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS, National Volunteer Corps) has announced plans to establish a number of Raksha Sena or "Defense Army" groups in the tribal state of Chhatisgarh, central India. Each unit will consist of 21 young people recruited by an RSS front organization, whose name means the Religious Awakening Department.

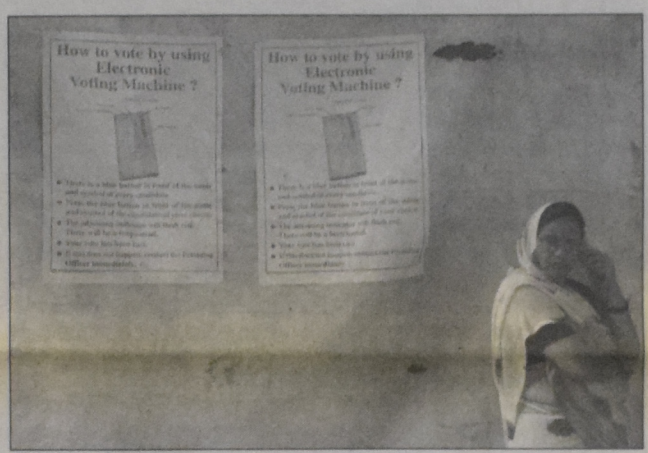
Christian leaders say they have strong evidence that these groups will actively – even aggressively – discourage Christian conversions in the state and other parts of central India.

According to sources, the establishment of the "Defense Army" was supported by Dilip Singh Judeo, former Minister of Environment and Forestry.

"Homecoming" movement

During his term in office, Judeo led the coercive and often violent "Homecoming" movement, in which Hindu extremists held ceremonies to reconvert tribal Christians back to Hinduism. At its peak, Hindu volunteers forcibly rounded up tribal Christians and took them to camps where, under armed guard, Judeo ceremonially washed their feet. Judeo then declared the Christians had "reconverted" to Hinduism.

Evidence of Judeo's involvement in the reconversion campaign was clearly shown in a documentary called "Fishers of Men," produced by Mumbai film producer Ranjan Kamath.



Voting in India

Judeo also attended a two-day training session for Defense Army recruits the second week of May at a campsite in Raipur, the capital of Chhatisgarh. According to a report in the Organiser, the monthly publication of the RSS, the recruits were given extensive training in archery and shooting at the camp.

The recruits were addressed by Indresh Kumar, a top official of the RSS. Forty groups of trainees also went on a "mass contact tour" of Raipur, where they distributed anti-conversion literature.

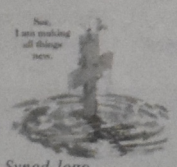
In the closing session, Judeo spoke about the "Homecoming" movement, saying it had forced Christian missions to reconsider their activities in India. "Nuns have started wearing saffron robes instead of their traditional white ones," he told the cheering recruits.

He also called on the trainees to "move into the interior parts of the country to check religious conversions," and encouraged them to revive the Homecoming movement, even if the pro-Hindu Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) was defeated in the general elections. The BJP government had sup-

See **Hindu militants** *page 2...*

Canadian Anglican Synod does flip-flop: first defers then affirms "sanctity" of same-sex unions

St. Catharines, Ontario – At its triennial General Synod held in St. Catharines, Ontario, the Anglican Church of Canada faced the divisive issue of same-sex marriage. The issue has divided the church in the diocese of Westminster, B.C., where the liberal Bishop Michael Ingham used hardball tactics to try to bring conservative congregations opposed to his introduction of same-sex blessing in line. It has also divided the denomination as a whole.



Synod logo

At the beginning of the assembly, Canon Gregory Cameron, a senior official close to the Archbishop of Canterbury, warned the delegates that authorizing the blessing of "committed same sex unions" would have serious consequences for the unity of the global Anglican community.

"... if you say 'yes,' the work of the Lambeth Commission be-comes horribly complicated. We will be told that the Anglican Church of Canada refuses to hear the voice and to heed the concerns of your fellow Anglicans in the growing provinces of the Global South, who are your international family."

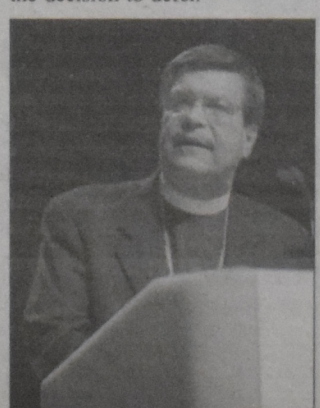
Same-sex decision deferred

After debating the issue for the allotted time, the synod concluded that it could not make a decision without radically alienating a segment of the church and voted to delay a decision on the acceptance of same-sex blessings until its next meeting in 2007.

A proposal to leave the decision to the local diocese raised fierce opposition. In its place came a proposal to study whether such blessings are a "matter of doctrine," with action being put off to the general synod in 2007. Clergy and laity voted 142 to 118 in favor of the deferral, while bishops voted 22 to 12 in favor.

The decision received immediate praise from Rowan Williams, the Archbishop of Canterbury. "The decision to defer the question of the right of dioceses over same-sex blessings offers hope for the continuing collegiality of the Anglican Communion," Williams said.

Appeals from Aboriginal delegates and other groups to delay the vote on same-sex blessings because their communities were not ready for it strongly influenced the decision to defer.



Canon Gregory Cameron

Sanctity of same-sex relationships

The next day, however, the same delegates approved a statement that "affirms the integrity and sanctity of committed adult same-sex relationships."

The statement was intended to send gay and lesbian Anglicans a welcome message after the vote of the previous day and to assuage those disappointed by the deferral.

"Our church has always had gay couples and they have been welcome. This would affirm we recognize them as children of God," said delegate Cassandra McCollum of the Yukon, who identified herself as bisexual.

Chris Ambidge, Toronto leader of Integrity, the Anglican gay and

See **Synod** *page 2...*

Hindu militants ... continued

ported the agenda of Hindu nationalist activists.

Main target Christian missionaries

Although election results announced the following day, May 10, confirmed the defeat of the BJP, John Dayal, secretary general of the All India Christian Council (AICC), is still concerned about the development of the Defense Army.

"We have enough evidence that they are targeting Christians," he said. "Local RSS leaders, including Judeo, have gone on record saying their main target is Christian missionaries, and the latest were the statements at their meeting on May 9, as quoted in their own official organ, the Organiser.

"The amount of hate literature we have unearthed indicates RSS and its sister organizations began preparations for a Defense Army a long time back," he added.

Another Christian leader, who preferred to remain anonymous, agreed. "In Gujarat, they succeeded in turning the tribals against the Muslims, and in Jhabua they have been routinely attacking Christian missions," he told Compass. "In Udaipur district of Rajasthan, the church has been so frightened that pastors would rather not complain at all."

No room for other faiths

Launched in 1925 for the purpose of "propagating Hindu culture," the RSS advocates a form of Hindu nationalism, or Hindutva, which seeks to establish India as a Hindu nation. Hindutva strongly rejects the idea of a composite Indian identity brought about by a synthesis of different cultures and faiths.

Though no official data is available, AICC sources claim that 5,000 to 20,000 Christian tribals have been forcibly "reconverted" to Hinduism over the past five years. The forced reconversions took place in the four central Indian states of Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Chhatisgarh and Jharkhand. Reconversion ceremonies were also reported in Gujarat and Orissa states.

Chhatisgarh is a new state, carved out of Madya Pradesh less than four years ago. The population is two-thirds tribal, many of whom are poor and illiterate. Major industry in the state is controlled by the upper caste Brahmin community.

"I'm not surprised that this region had been chosen, as the people are poor, the church is weak, and pastoral care is stretched," said Dayal. "The distances to cover are long and often roads don't exist. The police are always far away, out of reach and often on the side of the Brahmins."

In *We or Our Nationhood Defined*, a book written by key RSS leader Madhav Sadashiv Golwalkar and often referred to as the "Bible" of the RSS, Hindus are encouraged to see their religion as the only legitimate faith in India. Golwalkar believes that Christians, Muslims and other minority communities "must lose their separate existence to merge in the Hindu race."

Their only other alternative, according to Golwalkar, is to "stay in the country, wholly subordinated to the Hindu Nation, claiming nothing, deserving no privileges, far less any preferential treatment – not even citizen's rights."

HIndu temple in Punjab

Churches demand justice and safety from new Indian government

Anto Akkara

New Delhi (ENI) – Churches and Christian action groups in India have urged the new coalition government of the world's largest democracy to take corrective action to make religious minorities feel secure and to provide equal opportunities for them.

The demand came after the United Progressive Alliance (UPA), led by the secular Indian National Congress party took control of the country May 22 following its electoral victory over a coalition led by the Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).

During six years of BJP rule, hundreds of attacks on minority Christians and Muslims were carried out by Hindus, sometimes said to enjoy immunity from prosecution with the complicity of government authorities, especially in states such as Gujarat and Orissa that witnessed the worst atrocities.

"We cannot feel safe or happy when culprits' heinous violence – like the burning alive of missionaries, rape of nuns and burning down of churches – goes unpunished," said Church of South India (CSI) moderator Bishop B P Sugandar in New Delhi.

Sugandar was addressing a news conference after the executive of the Communion of Churches in India (CCI), a new grouping that includes the Church of South India, the Church of North India and the Mar Thoma Church, each of which says it has links with Anglicanism.

The CCI urged the Indian government "to uphold the secular and democratic character of India" and to "allow minorities freedom to run their institutions without fear and bias."

The CNI moderator, Bishop Zakariah James Terom, appealed to the government to withdraw anti-conversion laws in some states, said by critics to have been enacted in recent years to enable the harassment of religious minorities. "The right to practice and proclaim one's faith is a fundamental right," Terom told ENI.

Separately, 19 leading social activist groups in Gujarat state – three of them Christian – issued a charter of demands on June 1 to the federal government, regarding what they described as the genocide of Muslim minorities and attacks on Christians in the troubled state ruled by the BJP.

Synod ... continued

lesbian caucus, said the "sanctity" action will be very helpful in evangelizing gays and lesbians. "This says the Anglican Church values you as partnered people," he said.

Similar blessings have taken place quietly for many years in the US and England. In England an estimated 50 parishes are prepared to conduct blessings and some have been doing so since the late 1970s. The United Church of Canada, equivalent to the Methodists in Britain, have allowed same-sex services for a decade.

Conservatives dissent

Nine conservative bishops of the Anglican Church of Canada (about one-third of the bishops) issued a statement the same evening saying that Synod had committed an error when they approved such a statement. "Synod appears to have pre-empted [the work commissioned by the previous decision] by summarily expressing the opinion that it affirms the 'sanctity' of committed adult same-sex relationships," said a spokesman for the group.

"Sanctity equals blessing," said Rev. Charlie Masters, national director of Anglican Essentials. "This entire discussion is about whether we can bless same-sex unions. So the matter has suddenly already been decided."

The Primate of Bahamas and the West Indies, Archbishop Drexel Gomez, said: "It is completely un-acceptable to orthodox Christians that same-sex unions are de-scribed as 'holy.' Such language is reserved for marriage alone. The attempt to give 'committed adult same-sex relationships' the same theological

Bishop Donald Harvey reads a statement from nine Bishops expressing their dismay with Synod decisions

stature as marriage ... will reap devastating consequences."

In his letter, he wrote: "The amendment goes much further than the original motion in employing expressions which Scripture uses to describe marriage (Eph 5:25-33). In accordance with Scripture, your own Prayer Book uses this language in its marriage service. It is completely unacceptable to Bible believing orthodox Christians that same-sex unions are described as 'holy'. Such language is reserved for marriage alone."

The newly elected leader of the Anglican Church of Canada, Archbishop Andrew Hutchison called the statement of the nine dissenting bishops divisive. "I think the effect will be to reinforce division within the church," he said.

That's also what Anglican Essentials said of the statement adopted by Synod.

Bishop Michael Ingham, Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams, and former Canadian Primate Michael Peers

News

As one Sudanese conflict wanes, another flares up

KHARTOUM, Sudan (Zenit.org) – Hopes for peace in Sudan rose at the end of May with the signing of an agreement between the government and southern rebels. Reuters reported that the accords could help end Africa's longest-running civil war. The agreements settled the status of three disputed areas – the Nuba Mountains, Southern Blue Nile and Abyei – and set up postwar power-sharing arrangements.

Exact data on the war's fallout are hard to obtain. Some estimates say the 21-year-old war between the Islamic government and the mainly Christian and animist rebels have left up to 2 million dead and forced another 4 million to flee their homes.

The agreements do not, however, resolve a conflict raging in the Darfur area, where concern is in-creasing over the west of Sudan. The U.N. Security Council called for the immediate deployment of international monitors in the Darfur region.

Aid efforts hampered

A U.N. press release recently highlighted the problems of providing aid to Darfur. The Sudanese government has lifted some restrictions on humanitarian visits to the refugees, but imposed other restraints which, along with insufficient external funding, effectively impede timely assistance, said Jan Egeland, head of the U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs.

On the day the new procedures were announced, the United Nations had 93 visas applications outstanding and several major nongovernmental organizations were still waiting for visas for more than 60 relief workers, explained Egeland.

Moreover, the U.N. Children's Fund, UNICEF, was told recently that its exemption to import drugs could be revoked, making it liable to experience delays of several months while emergency medical supplies were tested in Sudanese laboratories, he said. Meanwhile, the rainy season was fast approaching, which could make roads impassable.

Fears of a new genocide

Firsthand information on the situation in western Sudan is scarce, owing to government restrictions on journalists and aid workers. Press reports in recent months speak of bloody attacks on villages, carried out by members of the Sudanese army and air force, as well as raids by an Khartoum-allied Arab militia known as the Janjawid.

Janjawid horsemen

In a report on Sudan published May 23, the International Crisis Group (ICG) noted that it was just a month ago that the international community marked the 10th anniversary of the Rwandan genocide with promises of "never again." The ICG warned that without decisive action an already "substantial ethnic cleansing" could turn into something just as deadly as Rwanda.

The report estimated the Darfur death toll at 30,000 since the conflict erupted in February 2003. The area now faces the danger of another 350,000 deaths due to starvation and disease, the report said.

According to the ICG, a cease-fire signed by the Sudan government and rebels in Darfur April 8 is not working. Up to 1.2 million people have been forced from their homes and now live in poorly run government-controlled camps within Darfur, where they remain vulnerable to attack by the Janjawid.

The report explained that the root causes behind the rebellion in Darfur include "economic and political marginalization, underdevelopment, and a long-standing government policy of arming and supporting militias from Darfur's Arab nomadic tribes against the mainly African farming communities."

The rebels had some success in the first months. But soon the government unleashed the Janjawid militias, backed by its regular forces, on civilian populations thought to be supportive of the insurgency. The conflict differs from the rebellion in the south, which pits an Islamic government against Christians and animists. Darfur's population is uniformly Muslim, but the government has manipulated ethnic divisions between the Arab and African communities.

"This has led to massive displacement, indiscriminate killings, looting and mass rape, all part of a deliberate effort to empty key parts of the region of those suspected of harboring rebel sympathies," explained the ICG report.

The attacks were directed against civilians and included burning villages, mass killings, the forced displacement of populations, destruction of food stocks and the looting of livestock by government and militia forces. The methods amount to more than a normal counterinsurgency strategy, according to Human Rights Watch.

Human Rights Watch called for more action by the international community to deal with the abuses in Darfur. The United Nations and European nations have condemned the human rights violations, but the watchdog group said that the approach so far has been too low-key. The United States has taken the strongest stance on the issue. But the report commented that U.S. and European policy-makers have not been unified in their approach to Darfur, allowing Sudan to play various governments against each other to its own advantage.

And the report accused African countries of "little or no public condemnation" of the abuses committed by Sudan. In fact, African members of the U.N. Commission on Human Rights helped to undermine a resolution proposed in April to appoint a special rapporteur and to condemn the Khartoum government's abuses in Darfur.

Government's role confirmed by U.N.

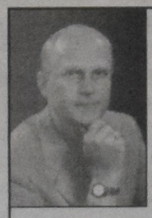
On May 7 the office of the U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights issued a report on the situation in Darfur. A U.N. team during a visit heard testimony from refugees on how their villages had suffered aerial bombardments as well as attacks by helicopter gunships. While the U.N. team did not see firsthand evidence of bombing, the report concluded that "the weight of witness testimony alleging the use of air attacks, often with much detail, raises considerable disquiet that the Government of the Sudan has, in certain locations, been using aircraft in indiscriminate attacks on population centers."

Witnesses interviewed also confirmed the presence of government soldiers in the infantry attacks on villages, along with the presence of Janjawid militia. The report also mentioned that those interviewed invariably described the Janjawid as being exclusively "Arab," as opposed to the victims who were described as "black" or "African."

The U.N. report had no doubts in concluding that the Sudanese government is involved in the attacks. "While the Government of the Sudan maintained that it was making a concerted effort to reestablish law and order and effective accountability in the region but that it was being undermined in these efforts by the actions of the rebels, this was not, in the opinion of the mission, borne out by realities on the ground," said the report.

The U.N. team also confirmed that the government was behind the militia activities. "Many with whom the mission spoke, including senior government officials, stated that the Government had recruited, uniformed, armed, supported and sponsored militias," the report concluded.

The report concentrated on the government's actions, noting that the U.N. officials were not allowed to visit rebel-controlled areas. The report did note, however, that rebel forces also appear to be guilty of human rights violations. Sudan's 21 years of violence may not be over, after all.



NOBODY EVER PLANS TO MAKE THE TAXMAN A BENEFICIARY OF THEIR WILL

There are many ways to minimize your tax liability. I can help you make sure your heirs receive the maximum amount from your estate.

Clarence Weima, CFP
Phone: (800) 488.9817
Senior Financial Consultant
Email: clarence.weima@investorsgroup.com

Investors Group SOLUTIONS BUILT AROUND YOU.
Investors Group Financial Services Inc.

TORONTO 2004 AMSTERDAM

Via Martinair

FLIGHTS DEPART/RETURN ON MONDAYS, TUESDAYS & SATURDAYS

WE OFFER SPECIAL RATES, SELL OFFS AND EMERGENCY LAST MINUTE TRAVEL

CALL US AND BOOK NOW!

VERSTRAETE TRAVEL & CRUISES
(Offices in Aurora & St.Catharines)
36 Secord Dr. St.Cath. ON L2N 1K8
Tel: 905-934-4414
or Long. Dist.1-800-405-6088
Visit us at www.verstraetetravel.com

Editorial

Are you one of those nasty conservatives Martin is talking about?

Harry der Nederlanden

In a few days, we as citizens of a great democracy are empowered to go to our poling booths and mark a ballot. How the majority of us mark that ballot will determine more or less how this country will be governed over the next several years.

It's important to vote because Human Rights Watch recently told the world that Canada has a problem with police brutality, and the UN recently chastised us for deporting an Iranian assassin. We need to stop this slide into fascism.

[It would have been sporting of Human Rights Watch to also mention North Korea's nasty habit of throwing Christians into concentration camps, but Canada has been acting so self-righteous of late, we had to be taken down a peg or two – along with the US, of course. And the UN had to get tough with somebody after addressing the genocide in Sudan by expressing its "solidarity" with that country in overcoming its problems.

Yes, I'm indulging in cheap sarcasm, but those two cheap shots at Canada do tell us something about the state of global politics.]

Even before we cast our ballots, however, we can be quite sure that Canada will pretty much follow a course that has already been set. Despite all the conjuring with the word "change," neither of the leading parties really champions drastic change, nor does the Canadian electorate. It has become an election about cooking the books: how to juggle the numbers so that the government provides us with more of everything without gobbling up more of our take-home pay.

This is the first time that I've followed a federal election on a day-by-day basis. There is actually no good reason to do so. Once you've ascertained where the parties stand on key issues, you hardly need a blow-by-blow report of the campaigns to decide who to support.

This year the Liberals are using the Internet. Every day brings a half-dozen ads from info@liberal.ca which are light on info. It should be called disinfo@liberal.ca. The ads are, of course, designed to get me to vote Liberal. If I do vote Liberal, it will be in spite of the ads, not because of them. I find most of them offensive.

Over the last week especially, the big story has had less to do with party policies than tactics, especially those of the Liberal party. They are low and hurtful. And Martin is into it up to his ears.

First, something about the respective platforms. I was more than a little puzzled by the fact that Martin, after stalking the leadership of his party so long and creating a budget only a few months ago, didn't get his platform nailed down until almost two weeks into the campaign. It was released plank by plank, and every time we were hit over the head with it as if it were the key issue of the Liberal campaign.

No doubt, part of the reason was that Martin was a bit discombobulated to find that Harper was standing in approximately the same place he was. How can you look liberal (small "l") if the other fellow is making promises almost as liberal as yours? Martin was scrambling to distinguish his platform from Harper's. A former fiscal conservative, Martin has frantically been giving himself a make-over. He has by and large been embracing the Chretien legacy – and then some, as if the government piggy-bank (our wallets) is bottomless.

In this, he has virtually been matched by the so-called Conservatives. Alright, maybe the Conservatives haven't been quite as generous. No child care. But they've promised sizeable tax cuts. [Strange, isn't it, when a tax cut is presented almost as a government hand-out? 'Listen, folks, we'll *allow* you to keep more of your own money.' When we begin to think government has the right to dispose over all our income, we're in deep trouble.]

Both parties are acting as if prosperity and high employment are as permanent a feature of the Canadian landscape as the Rockies. They see no clouds on the horizon. With Bert Hielema, I believe our government has to prepare for some difficult times ahead – higher energy prices, an ageing population and a nosedive in the US economy, to mention only three. It's good to be optimistic – but not with someone else's money.

According to the folks who measure such things, June 28, the day of the elections, coincides with the date we stop working to pay our taxes and start putting money into our own accounts. In the future, I propose that elections always be scheduled for tax freedom day. It serves as a good reminder of how much power we've ceded to the government in deciding how to allocate our income.

Back to the campaign.

In the first week of the campaign, the Liberals conducted a public opinion poll asking voters in Ontario whether they would be more or less likely to vote for the Conservative party if they knew it had been "taken over by evangelical Christians."

Clare Hoy, a columnist for the *National Post* asked: "What do you think the public reaction would be to such blatant religion-baiting if, in a public opinion poll focusing on religion – rather than on specific issues – we substituted the phrase 'evangelical Christians,' with, oh, 'Jews,' or 'Muslims,' or even 'Roman Catholics?'

"What would the media reaction be if Conservative leader Stephen Harper cited Martin's quite public admission of church attendance and asked how those of us who are not Roman Catholics would feel if we knew the Liberals had been 'taken over by Roman Catholics?'"

Even some Liberals were appalled at the attempt to draw on and incite stereotypes that border on religious bigotry. In the attempt to paint Harper as a member of a segment of Canadian society – conservative evangelicals – that is a threat to Canadian values, the Liberals were encouraging Canadians to see evangelicals as extremists, as dangerous, mean-spirited, intolerant and bigoted. Members of Martin's own party asked him to stop that kind of campaigning. Dennis Mills, a Liberal MP who organized the Pope's visit to Canada, said, "Just because a person has strong faith doesn't make him or her a scary person," and he pointed out that Martin himself is a devout Catholic who attends church every Sunday, even when campaigning.

Toronto MP John McKay, a Liberal and a devout evangelical, quoted in the *Globe and Mail*, said evangelical Christians account for 10 to 12 per cent of the Canadian population, but historically they have never voted as a block for any particular party. The one way to turn them into a voting block, he warned, is "by attacking a leader based upon his or her religion."

For a while the Liberals did back off from playing the religion card. But over the last week, the themes have returned with a vengeance. The Liberal electronic ads (not all of which are kept on file on their website) persist in trying to associate Harper with a conspiracy to introduce a "radical," "extremist" agenda which he plans to impose on Canadians "by stealth." It is an agenda that is contrary to Canadian values, that is contrary to the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and – without actually coming out and saying so – means the suppression of the rights of the majority by a minority of religious zealots. Harper and the Conservatives intend to take away women's right to choose and the rights of gays and lesbians and other minorities, the Liberals keep repeating in different ways. Again and again, Harper is associated by the Liberals with that insidious segment of the public intent on undermining not just Canadian values but even Canadian law.

To attack Harper, Martin continues to paint a picture of evangelicals in this country as mean bigots out to deprive others of basic rights and to impose their values on them.

As a matter of fact, as many journalists have pointed out, the positions of Harper and Martin on abortion and gay marriage are virtually the same. Neither wanted to make them election issues. In fact, the only way to cast a vote on those issues is to vote for the Christian Heritage Party, which, however, doesn't have candidates running in every riding (See www.chpelection.ca).

One might argue that in part Harper has contributed to the present situation himself by so studiously suppressing the issues that matter most to the social conservatives. By pushing those issues off the table, they became, he hoped, things that could not be talked about in this election. This does, in many ways, suppress certain voices.

Granted, every party does that. For every party, certain issues are declared non-issues, even though they matter a lot to some folks. And the more the major parties target a lowest common denominator of voters, the narrower will be the range of issues addressed. That's why we have to keep looking for ways to make more voices heard during the elections. Get out and make your voice heard. Vote.

Christian Courier

Founded in 1945

An independent biweekly that seeks to:
report on significant events in the Christian community and the world; express opinions infused by Scripture and rooted in a Reformed perspective;
provide contact for the Christian community.

EDITORIAL TEAM & PRODUCTION STAFF
Editor: Harry der Nederlanden editor@christiancourier.ca
Circulation: Rose der Nederlanden
subscriptions@christiancourier.ca
Accounts/Advertising Manager: Ineke Medcalf-Strayer
accounts@christiancourier.ca

The publication of comments, opinions or advertising does not imply agreement or endorsement by *Christian Courier* or the publisher. Please contact circulation if you cannot afford the subscription price but want to receive *Christian Courier*.

Christian Courier
1 Hiscott St, St. Catharines ON L2R 1C7
Tel: (905) 682-8311; 1-800-969-4838
Fax: (905) 682-8313; Web site: www.christiancourier.ca
Publications Mail Registration No. 09375
We acknowledge the financial assistance of the Government of Canada, through the Publications Assistance Program (PAP), toward our mailing costs.

Letters

What makes a marriage different from friendship?

I have a quibble with James Skillen's definition of marriage [See Nov. 3 CC].

First, [his] analogy between same-sex relationships and friendships: [he argues that just] as a friendship requires no legal recognition, so too ought a homosexual relationship properly exist outside of the law.

... This analogy does not recognize that friendships and same-sex partnerships are qualitatively different. In other words, not just different in degree (ie, same-sex relationships as really good friendships between two persons of the same sex) but different in their very nature. Being heterosexual has never prevented me from having friends, either male or female....

Which is to say, my friendships with other men are not qualified, by me, as being 'homosexual' and my friendships with women 'heterosexual' in nature. [Neither] relationship can be properly qualified as being sexual in any way. This is a distinction that clearly separates same-sex relationships from friendships.

The effort ... to separate same-sex relationships from the category of marriage and to instead stick them in the category of friendships [fails].

Dr. Skillen defines marriage as:

"an enduring, covenant bond of love between a man and a woman that legitimately bounds sexual intercourse and the consequences of procreation."

Such a narrow definition riles against those heterosexual marriages for which the possibility of having children, via sexual intercourse, is not possible – whether voluntarily or involuntarily. I think of my own aunt and uncle who, while never having children as a result of any procreative act, indeed have two children they have adopted from Korea. When I think of their marriage and their family, I can only conclude that their decision to adopt children is, in itself, a procreative act equal to any other.

I fail to see the necessary relation between sexual intercourse and that [having children] defines a marriage, or a family.... Simply put, a marriage does not require children in order to be legally recognized as a marriage, or to be recognized as meaningful in the eyes of one's faith community.

[JW points out that only a very small part of married life, even for a healthy couple, is devoted to sexual intercourse, and some of that occurs when conception is not possible.]

A love beyond sex

What is of grave concern to me, both in relation to my parents and their love, and the love shared between same-sex partners, is what they are to do with the [remainder of their sexual life]. What are they doing? And why are they doing it? Are they just being friends? ....

To my thinking, sexual intercourse – and sexuality for that matter – has to do with the cementing of spiritual and emotional bonds. It can be a salve that carries two people through pain, an external expression of an internalized closeness that needs to be shared, it can be a metaphor for a partnership, it can be a symbol for love – a love beyond mere procreative abilities – but a love that will continue to endure long after the kids have moved out and the demands of building a family are over.

That's why my parents aren't just friends now, they are something more than friends. They have something a mere friendship would fail to honor. They made a life-long commitment to honor that special kind of togetherness in front of friends and family, a kind of commitment that friends – for why would it occur to them? – would never make.

When we consider the desire of many same-sex partners to unite in marriage, and to have that marriage recognized by the state, we have to consider that such a desire is simply not found in friendships, nor will friends ever fight for that kind of recognition. This is surely more than a mere "empirical mistake." I am sure that same-sex partners recognize the fact that the sexual intercourse they share will never result in pregnancy. I do, on the other hand, see no reason to disbelieve that same-sex partners can share a sexual relationship that cements a deep and abiding love for one another akin to the kind of love and commitment that my parents enjoy.... And not only that, but a deep and abiding love that is the true basis for what it means to start a family, irrespective of sexual orientation.

The sexual life of my aunt and uncle, while not a procreative one, according to Skillen, is indeed a procreative relationship given the family that issues out of that relationship. And ought not the state to legally recognize such relationships, and the families that can issue from them?

To that end, I would appeal to Dr. Skillen to reconsider his description of marriage, in order to include people like my aunt and uncle, to include the autumn years of couples like my parents, to include those marriages within which partners choose not to have children, or simply cannot, and, perhaps, to include those same-sex relationships that qualitatively embrace the same abiding love and commitment that we have come to associate with marital love.

(This letter was edited for length.)

Jonathan Weverink
Toronto, ON

Is Bolt suffering from the expatriate syndrome?

When a person exchanges his native land for another he is sometimes referred to as an expatriate.

In many cases these persons attempt to stay in touch with their native land through telephone calls, letters from home, the occasional visit or the reading of a newspaper published "back home." Slowly but surely, through a process of social osmosis, they begin to voice the outlook of their country of residence. The longer the absence from their native country the more pronounced that change becomes, often unknown to the expatriates themselves.

It is reported that the current US administration, prior to its invasion of Iraq, heavily relied on information and points of view supplied by Iraqi expatriates, who in some cases had not been physically present in Iraq for many years. It is not difficult to see the terrible consequences of this policy in the aftermath of the Iraqi invasion.

Prof. Bolt is normally credited with a sharp and analytical mind which makes him a good dogmatician. Unfortunately in the comments that he made about the Canada-US relationship with respect to terrorism, he speaks with the voice of the expatriate, who has adopted perhaps unwittingly, the outlook of the country of his current residence. And in some way he has become "plus royal que le roi." That too is a by-product of being an expatriate.

In his lecturing style on possible behavior he voices the typical US point of view which allocates to itself the right, based on might, of criticizing and interfering with any and all in the global village, but in turn denies others the similar privilege, let alone make critical comments about the USA and its public policy.

The heart of the disagreement on how or whether to approach any government lies in the failure of the Christian Reformed Church to be "a bi-national protestant denomination...." This does not work and it does not properly provide for opportunities to address public issues from different points of view. Canada and the Christian Reformed Church in it is not and never will be the same as the US and the Christian Reformed Church in it. The sooner we define the proper framework for the policy of two churches in two great nations, the better we will be able to serve the King of the Church in more than one way.

To the readers of CC, I would say, be careful to follow the advice of an expatriate. Remember Iraq.

John G. Klomps

Press for proportional representation

Another election, again under the "first past the post" system. Does it turn you off? Does it make any sense in a so-called democratic nation?

Not to me! Are you turned off enough not to vote? It almost does me and I certainly understand the apathy and disinterest of especially the younger generation.

Our present archaic system favors the larger parties and shuts out the smaller ones. According to Fair Vote Canada the 2000 federal election resulted in giving the Liberals 40.8 percent of the total vote, 57.5 percent of the seats and 100 percent of the power.

With a majority government even the second and third largest parties can watch and holler from the sidelines. But they have no influence if an arrogant majority acts like a democratic dictatorship and blatantly ignores the election promises they make. It is one reason many do not vote and that should concern us all.

But instead of sitting back and not voting we should demand reform in our present system. At candidates meetings confront the candidates with this issue and hold their feet to the fire on this one. Press for proportional representation and fixed election dates. Join Fair Vote Canada, be vocal and challenge the establishment.

And do not listen to the fear-mongering of the (mostly left) media who like us to believe that minority or coalition governments are bad for the country. Look at the many democracies where it does work, especially in continental Europe.

Hilbert Rumph
Drayton, ON

***Please note ***
Summer issue dates
July 5,
August 2, 16, & 30
September 13.

Christian Courier

Member of Canadian Church Press and Evangelical Press Association

Canada Mail:
PUBLICATIONS MAIL AGREEMENT NO. 40009999
REGISTRATION NO. 9375
RETURN UNDELIVERABLE CANADIAN ADDRESSES TO
CHRISTIAN COURIER
1 HISCOTT ST
ST. CATHARINES ON L2R 1C7
email: **subscriptions@christiancourier.ca**

U.S. Mail:
Christian Courier (USPS 518-090)
Second-class postage paid at
Lewiston NY
Postmaster:
send address changes to:
Christian Courier, Box 110
Lewiston NY 14092

Subscriptions:	Canada (G.S.T. incl.)	U.S.A	Overseas
one yr. (25 issues)	$40.00	$32.00 (US)	one year - $85.00
two yrs. (50 issues)	$75.00	$60.00 (US)	

Advertising deadlines: display advertising: Tuesday, 9 a.m. (13 days before publication date); classified advertising: Tuesday, 9 a.m. (13 days before publication date).
See classified pages or web site **www.christiancourier** for more details.
(ISSN 1192-3415) Published biweekly on Mondays.
Address all correspondence to: 1 Hiscott St, St. Catharines ON L2R 1C7
Tel: 905-682-8311 or 1-800-969-4838, or fax: 905-682-8313
e-mail: Advertising: ads@christiancourier.ca
Subscriptions: subscriptions@christiancourier.ca **PRINTED IN CANADA**

The Holy Spirit and the elections: the power of Pentecost

Harry der Nederlanden

The title is deliberately provocative. Just about the last thing we'd bring together are election campaigns and holiness. In fact, the Holy Spirit and spirituality are routinely invoked to deny to power, especially political power, any element of either holiness or spirituality. Power, we're told, always serves selfish ends, and in the contemporary imagination it is always repressive. It is a balloon that has to be pricked, a boil that has to be lanced, a rigid, unwieldy edifice whose foundations have to be undermined. To many, to be more specific, the epitome of political power is Bush's America, whose horses and chariots need to be drowned with Pharaoh's in the depths of the sea.

My invocation of politics and Pentecost in the same breath, however, is not to give pastoral advice on how to make election campaigns more spiritual and to suggest a less materialistic political platform. I'll leave that to Citizens for Public Justice and the Christian Heritage Party. I just want to bring the two terms a little closer together – to show that they are kissing cousins.

Out theology doesn't give us much help in this respect.

'For good reason,' you may reply, 'for the Bible keeps them poles apart.' Yes and no.

The birth of nations

The Bible certainly warns us repeatedly against relying on our own powers, whether that be in construction (the Tower), in military might (Jericho), in wealth (Job) or in sexual potency (Abraham and Sarah). One might read Genesis and Exodus as the story of the birth of a nation turned on its head. The great political theorist Eric Voegelin traces the typical birth of a nation and royal dynasty to the banding together of a people under a heroic military leader to fight a common enemy. Military might and bloodshed are the midwives of the nation, he suggests.

Israel's birth, in contrast, has nothing whatsoever to do with heroism. The Israelites leave Egypt as lowly slaves led by a Pied Piper, a fugitive weathered from tending sheep in rough, inhospitable terrain.

Nevertheless, the land of promise is not simply given to them on a platter. They have to conquer it. They, too, have to be bloodied. The history of the Old Testament does not look away from the realities of territory, power, war, bloodshed, and kings with crowns and concubines.

But what does this bloody history have to do with holiness and the Holy Spirit? Just this: it is the process by which Israel is 'set apart' to be a holy nation, a people elected by God to bring forth the Messiah, the desire of the nations. And the Messiah really arouses the desire of the nations by pouring out his Spirit at Pentecost.

Detail from painting of Jean Restout c. 1732

The realm of the spirit

To keep the connection between Pentecost and politics in view, we have to contend with deeply entrenched connotations that associate the spiritual with the ethereal and non-material. The realm of the spirit in contemporary parlance is a realm of smoke and insubstantial forms that do not keep their shape. It is the opposite of the solidity and clarity of this world. It is nothing but the vibrations of another world within ours, a world beyond touch and beyond conceptualization.

But it isn't just this contemporary notion of spirituality that keeps us from thinking of a Spirit-driven politics; it is also, as I said, our own theological tradition. When it comes to the Christian life, in our systematic theologies the Spirit is discussed primarily in relation to 'inward' things. The Reformed tradition has invested strongly in laying out the process of individual conversion. In this process, it is the work of the Spirit to open our ears to recognize the truth of God's Word, to give new life to our hearts so that we repent and that faith may take root, to engraft us into Christ, who interprets Scripture for us so it becomes a lamp to our feet and to sustain in us the process of sanctification.

The Holy Spirit is, of course, also God, a person of the Trinity, and the word 'holy' is associated with him more than with the other persons. When applied to God, holiness suggests his utmost perfection and purity, his distance and majesty, his awesome Otherness. Yet, God says to us, "Be holy just as I am holy." That seems like mission impossible.

A public event

But it is this person, the one who seems least like a person to us, who at Pentecost was poured out on us and into us, communally and individually. When this happened in the history of redemption, it was not at all the inward, secret, invisible thing that it is in our theology. It was a very public event complete with sound effects and spectacular visuals – the sound of a mighty wind and tongues of fire. It happened in the public square.

In fact, at the time that it happened, Jerusalem was a microcosm of the Mediterranean world, for Jews from all over were in town to celebrate the Feast of Weeks, which was originally an agricultural festival celebrating and giving thanks for the "first fruits" of the early spring harvest. By this time, however, it had gradually lost its association with agriculture and had become the celebration of God's creation of the people of Israel. So this hugely public event happened on a kind of national holiday.

To sum up, when the Holy Spirit is poured out, it is a public, outward event that brings together not just Jesus' followers but also a crowd. It happens on a national day, but it brings together people from various languages who hear the gospel that Peter preaches (not gobbledy-gook) in their own language. The national becomes international.

Ecstasy and unpredictability

Yet, nowadays when we speak of Pentecost, it is invariably associated with Pentecostalism and the marvelous signs of tongue speaking and other spectacular happenings. As a result, the job description of the Holy Spirit is seen by and large in terms of invisible workings, such as regeneration, repentance, faith and personal holiness (sanctification). When his working does become visible, individuals go into an ecstatic state where they speak nonsense and perhaps do other silly things. This is a public event only insofar as it happens in church and can be seen there, but it tends to remove the person from the normal give-and-take of social intercourse. You don't want anyone carrying on like that at a tea party or a committee meeting hashing out a budget or a party platform.

Does the working of the Holy Spirit launch us into such a supernatural state that we lose contact with the normal, everyday concerns of life and social existence? Is this what it means to be holy and spiritual? (After all, it does serve to set a person apart, the meaning of 'holy.')

In terms of my own experience in the CRC in recent years, I've heard the Holy Spirit spoken of most often in connection with the serendipitous, the unexpected, the surprising, the unplanned, untaught, undisciplined and unpredictable. Seen from this angle, he moves entirely outside the sphere of human control and culture, blowing where he wills.

When we celebrate the Holy Spirit are we celebrating the arbitrariness and unpredictability of an absolute power that, like a hurricane, blows the roofs off our houses and knocks houses off their foundations? Sometimes, yes. But one of the signs of the Spirit's presence is comfort and joy. We don't celebrate hurricanes and tornadoes, although these are sometimes called 'acts of God.'

Some suggest that his forte is blowing away any sort of order, hierarchy, institutional structure, tradition, and habit created by human beings to ease their journey through time.

But the Holy Spirit is neither a demolition crew nor a revolutionary insurrection. When Paul describes the gifts that the Holy Spirit gives, they are gifts to the community and they create community and they propel that community outward into becoming an ever broader community. They are gifts that culminate above all in love and service.

The scene at Pentecost reminds us of the scene at the Tower of Babel. But here the word not only disperses the people: as they disperse, they create a worldwide community held together by the Word and the Word incarnate. The Spirit also gives that community the gift of offices and of gifted office-bearers. He creates order as well as disorder. In fact, the Spirit is the one who moves over the waters, the toohoo wabahoo of Genesis 1:1, to bring order to all creation.

Over there

I'm afraid that we've become so focused on the signs, on the sizzle, that we often miss the substance. We go looking for the exotic and the esoteric. We point over there. We point to chaotic, cacaphonous, charismatic assemblies and travel miles to be part of something new and strange and sensational, and miss the Holy Spirit's working under our very noses, in our very midst. We point to Africa and South America, and we miss the rich blessings the Spirit has bestowed on us here in the West, not just in the traditions and institutions that the faithful have built up and faithfully support but also in the political and economic institutions that give us peace and prosperity. We point to exceptional figures like Mother Theresa, Desmond Tutu and Martin Luther King, and we miss the Spirit's working in those who have given leadership among us over the years, not just as pastors, elders and deacons, but as founders of Christian schools, of the Christian Labour Association, of Citizens for Public Justice and of the Christian Farmers Federation, to mention only a few organizations.

The church in which I was raised – Maranatha in Beverly, Alberta – was raided by a charismatic church when I was in high school. Some members pointed to the marvelous signs that happened 'over there' and said Maranatha is dead as a doornail – no Spirit. But when my mother got bowel cancer, several ladies visited her and helped her regularly as clockwork, not just over the years of her treatment but long after. Did they get there on their own steam? No, but by the power of the Spirit. And amidst the misery of her illness my mother delighted in their visits and was filled with cheer and received healing. In them she experienced the Spirit as Comforter and Healer. As my parents aged, others in the congregation visited them regularly and took them out. Meanwhile, the church was wracked by debates about the

spectacular workings of the Spirit. I'd like to celebrate what those Maranatha (Kingdom come) folks did as a pretty spectacular working of the Spirit.

Closer to home

But we may look even closer to home. The Holy Spirit was not only wearing out the shoes of Mrs. Cupido, who hustled all around the congregation giving help wherever help was needed. He was also rousting mothers and fathers out of bed at the crack of dawn every morning to get their children dressed and off to school and fathers (mostly) off to work. He was also greening the fields and forest and blowing the rain clouds across the Rockies to bring rain to the plains. And he was raising songs from the throat of the meadowlark that used to wake me summer mornings.

And the Holy Spirit was and is maintaining a greater measure of order and justice than we deserve across this land through the offices of people we've elected. And whom we regularly vilify as scoundrels and hypocrites (sometimes with good reason). The Holy Spirit broods over the complex and often mysterious transactions of our banks and corporations and local businesses, too, so we can build homes and earn a living.

Sure, the devil and his minions are busy in these spheres as well. But if we get so hung up on seeing only the devil at work in our politicians, bankers and businessmen, before long we will have ceded it all to the master of lies. Perhaps, indeed, this is one reason for the scandal of our Enrons and Worldcoms. Some of our churches have become so morally antagonistic over toward the corporate world, they've virtually demonized them.

Holy orders

I came upon an observation by a French-Romanian intellectual as I was writing this:

"Whenever I happen to be in a city of any size, I marvel that riots do not break out every day: massacres, unspeakable carnage, a doomsday chaos. How can so many human beings coexist in a space so confined without destroying each other, without hating each other to death?" (E.M. Cioran, *History and Utopia*)

It's not a question we ask ourselves very often. The answer does not lie within ourselves. It is by the Holy Spirit. It is also by rules, social conventions, laws, government, and so on, of course, that is, by that huge conglomerate of habits and institutions we call society, culture, civilization.

The Holy Spirit does his marvelous and miraculous work by uniting his Spirit with our spirit. He doesn't only raise a holy hullabaloo, he also raises up artists, preachers, teachers, scientists, doctors, businessmen, mothers, fathers, janitors, carpenters, farmers, bankers, managers – and politicians. And he equips them with a wondrous variety of gifts, and then he works furiously and tirelessly to make them holy, that is to make them serve the glory of God and the shalom of his children.

I'm reminded of a very profane poem that was widely read in the wooly 70s by a big hairy Jewish poet called Allen Ginsberg as a footnote to "Howl." I quote only a few lines, skipping over some stuff that would offend:

Holy! Holy! Holy! Holy! Holy!...

Everything is holy! Everybody's holy! Everywhere is holy! Every day is in eternity!...

The bum's as holy as the seraphim! The madman is holy as you my soul are holy!

The typewriter is holy the poem is holy the voice is holy the hearer is holy....

And so on. You get the idea. It is no doubt premature to call everything holy, as Ginsberg well knew, for the first part of the poem is a howl of protest and disgust at America's greed and materialism, in which he cries: "Moloch! Moloch!"

Moloch the vast stone of war! Moloch the stunned governments!...

Moloch whose soul is electricity and banks!

But the Spirit is indeed making all things holy. Even as he also brings judgment, discontinuity and destruction. He also turns all of life into contested territory, a spiritual battlefield.

But his main occupation is cobbling things back together, restoring handiworks that were lost and spoiled, weaving God's purposes in and through our culture and politics by joining his Spirit to ours.

He doesn't confine his multitudinous activities to our churches or to the noisy eruptions of charismatics. He has brought back the robin, May showers, April breezes, tulips and daffodils, but he's also stirring in the politics of this land, perhaps even in the land to the south. And if you think good government is not a miracle wrought by the spirit, your spirit has grown jaded. Look around at the misery and suffering that lack of government and tyranny brings.

How beautiful, O Lord, are the feet of those who bring good government. Give courage to their spirits, plant in their hearts a passion for justice, breathe into them your holy desire for shalom. Breathe on the nations, O Giver of Life. Bring peace and justice to people here and in the Sudan, in Venezuela, in Afghanistan, in Iraq, in the Congo, in Nigeria, in Pakistan, in Indonesia, in Zimbabwe, in The Netherlands, and even in the US of A.

Holy! Holy! Holy is the work of politics. Save the work of our hands, O Lord, and make them holy! Save our cities, O Lord, and make them holy!

Send out your righteous breath; breathe upon the nations that all may breathe in your righteousness, your peace, and rejoice in the power of your Spirit!

Campus Culture

Peter Schuurman

Those Annoying Vegans

"They're a bunch of wackos," is the first response I get from most people whenever I mention the campus vegans (people who don't eat any animal products, not even cheese). Nothing seems to be closer to people's hearts than their stomach, and vegans violate sacred meat-eating traditions. "We love steak," we confess, if not a little defensively. But is appetite a theologically sound basis for ethics?

I know there are some misanthropic animal rights activists out there. I've read of this vegan woman who was asked if a dog and a man were drowning, who would she rescue first? "Let me think about it," she replied, as if the question involved an impossible moral dilemma.

Some say they are vegan for health reasons, but most will name the calculated cruelty of factory farms, and the chemically over-loaded animals that are squished into them. Most of us are not aware of where our food comes from, how its produced, or the monopolies that are formed by giant companies to drive the smaller or more ethically sensitive farmer out of business. We just go to the grocery store and take it off the shelf, blissfully unaware of the trauma that lies behind the cheap prices.

Mercy (less) dominion

I have been reading the book *Dominion: The Power of Man, the Suffering of Animals, and the Call to Mercy* by Matthew Scully, a speechwriter for George Bush. He implores the nation to retrieve the idea of dominion found in the Bible, because it is a clear indication of our God-given responsibilities towards our fellow creatures. "We were all sent into the world with different gifts and attributes," he writes. Animals are good for many things, but "governing isn't one of them. Someone has to assume dominion, and looking around the earth we seem to be the best candidates, exactly because we humans are infinitely superior in reason and alone capable of knowing justice under dominion still greater than our own."

He then goes on to document (at times very sarcastically), chapter after chapter, how poorly we have demonstrated dominion. He writes of the Safari Club, an elite hunting association that, among many sins, gives an "Intercontinental Award" to members who have shot and killed more than 369 different species of animals. He spends a chapter on the brutalities of whaling, seal clubbing, and dolphin spearing. Then he gets into the factory farm, describing how thousand upon thousand of pigs are put in mass confinement warehouses where they are delegated a stall in which they can barely lie down. When they can get down to sleep, it is on top of their own excrement, and at the cost of all kinds of bruises, welts, and cuts. Not even some soft straw.

Scully barely has the space to cover the environmental abuses of these "zoological gulags" as he calls them. Neither does he dig deeper into the slaughterhouse workplace, which is the most dangerous job in America. Good dominion takes time, money, and thoughtfulness. Cruel dominion is always, in the short run, cheaper and easier.

Animals are Neighbors, Too

It is significant to note that those who justify these practices use the same rhetoric as the pro-choice movement. You will hear people say things like "its only tissue" "its my right to do what I want" and "don't you force your values on me." It is a world ruled by efficiency, convenience, bigger profits, and whimsical preference. Behind that is a scientific materialism that refuses to revere the holiness of created life. As Descartes said, a screaming animal is only the noise of a broken machine. A thing to be used, and if need be, abused. This is autonomy, not the bequeathed dominion of a being supposedly "a little lower than the angels."

There is a third way that is neither idolatrously sentimental nor hard-hearted and cruel. It sees animals as a gift and responsibility, and directs their keeping and killing in merciful ways. This way is creative in its farming methods and concerned about a covenantal livelihood rather than competitive prices. Some alternative farms include Patchwork Family Farms, a collective that raises pigs without growth stimulants and antibiotics, and the Food Animal Concerns Trust, which works with small egg producers who have free-range chickens. Of course there is also the Christian Farmer's Federation, which seeks to nurture God glorifying farms in a variety of ways.

Vegans say those who visit slaughterhouses rarely eat meat again. We live in an age where daily meat eating is no longer necessary, let alone healthy. Numerous protein alternatives are readily available. While I am not vegan myself, I will entertain their persistent question: When does a necessary evil become just plain evil? We need to re-consider what good dominion is, and what Jesus meant in the great commission: "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15, KJV)

Peter Schuurman, chaplin at Brock University in St. Catharines, Ont. has been appointed Christian Reformed Home Missions' new Educational Mission Leader beginning October 2004.

Church

Dutch cathedral's 750 years marked with construction of scaffolding

Andreas Havinga

Amsterdam (ENI) – An ambitious project to construct what is claimed to be the largest scaffolding structure built in Europe has started in the Dutch city of Utrecht to link two sections of a former cathedral whose nave was destroyed by a 17th-century tornado.

The undertaking is one of many activities to celebrate the 750th anniversary of the Dom Church, where the tower and far end of the former cathedral have remained separate buildings since the tornado struck in 1674, say organizers. The 112-meter church tower is the tallest in the Netherlands.

The scaffolding will fill the gap between the two buildings to recreate the missing nave, or body of the church. The temporary structure is to be built in 30 days, whereas the original nave took 30 years to build. Construction began on May 6 and the nave built out of scaffolding will be opened on June 26.

The Dom Church is used for worship by a local congregation of the Protestant Church in the Netherlands (PCN). Its status as a cathedral was ended by the 16th-century Reformation.

The historic Dom Church in the city that hosts the headquarters of the Protestant and Roman Catholic churches in the Netherlands last December hosted the service of thanksgiving after the synod votes that gave the go-ahead for the formation of the PCN, a merger of three churches. The service was attended, among others, by Queen Beatrix and was broadcast on national television.

People walk through model village containing the Dom Church

In tense Cuban climate, church leaders request national dialogue

Manuel Quintero

Quito (ENI) — Cuba faces a tense political climate, marked by US restrictions seen as strengthening economic sanctions against the communist nation, and opposition leaders and churches are urging the holding of a national dialogue to discuss the future of the country.

"The situation here is so difficult, following the announcement by President George Bush of his administration's new plan to foster political changes in the island, that some people compare it to the climate of the October 1962 missile crisis," said Enrique Lopez Oliva, a journalist and writer on religion affairs, in an interview with Ecumenical News International from Havana.

"The general increase in the prices of basic commodities decreed by the Cuban government, the likely drop off in the remittances from Cubans living in the United States and the restrictions on Cubans and US people traveling between the two countries, have created a climate of extreme anxiety in the population of the island."

Lopez noted: "Some analysts are concerned about a new massive, uncontrolled wave of migration [out of Cuba], especially of young people, and security around foreign embassies has been beefed up."

The US administration's measures were designed to reduce hard currency on the island by limiting how often Cubans living in the United States can visit relatives on the island. They can currently visit once a year and spend $164US a day. The new rules allow visits only every third year with a daily expenditure of $50.

At the same time, a declaration by some 200 pastors and leaders in Cuba from 31 churches and ecumenical organizations, among them 20 Catholic lay people, has expressed "deep concern" about the country's future and has called for dialogue between churches and the Cuban government.

The statement, a copy of which has been received by ENI, followed a meeting at the Holy Trinity Cathedral of the Episcopal Church on May 25 convened by Baptist pastor Raul Suarez, a member of Cuba's National Assembly.

"We are deeply concerned about the future of our country" which now faces new actions furthering restricting the relationships within the Cuban family, already suffering because of its separation, actions that create additional difficulties for life in the island," said the statement.

The document calls for a "dialogue with the highest authorities of the Cuban government" to allow greater possibilities for "social action" by Protestant churches in the country.

A day after the meeting at the Episcopal cathedral, the Conference of Catholic Bishops of Cuba issued a statement that rejected the new economic restrictions announced by the United States, and at the same criticized a Cuban government decision to increase the prices of basic commodities by between 10 and 15 per cent.

"We deem unacceptable that the future of Cuba be planned on the basis of exclusions, much less of interventions dictated by a foreign government," said the Catholic bishops.

The US and Cuban government measures "impinge on the poorest families in the island," and add new hardships and burdens which aggravate the "already distressing situation," the bishops said.

The Catholic prelates urged the holding of a "national dialogue" to solve "the difficult social and economic situation of the Cuban people" and to "undertake the building of a more just society."

The Catholic and Protestant calls coincided with one issued by Oswaldo Paya Sardiñas, a leader of Cuba's internal opposition and architect of the so-called Varela Project, which called for peaceful albeit radical economic, social and political changes in Cuba.

On May 22, he called for a process of national dialogue in which "all willing Cubans, living in the island or abroad, whether they be members and supporters of the government or having opposed political positions, can participate."

Four Indonesian churches targeted in 'coordinated attack'

Samuel Rionaldo

JAKARTA (Compass) – Mobs armed with sticks attacked four churches in Banten province, Indonesia, on Sunday June 6. Minor damage was done to church furniture and windows; and one pastor was punched in the head, although he was not seriously injured. Captain Hamdani of the local police department said the attacks were a reaction to churches meeting in unregistered places of worship.

The attacks took place in Banten province on the outskirts of Jakarta. Several similar attacks have taken place in recent months. Hamdani told reporters from the Associated Press that the attacks on Sunday appeared to have been coordinated, but he would not comment on motives.

Under Indonesian law, all churches must apply for official permission to construct a church or to worship in privately-owned or rented facilities. However in recent years, permission has been increasingly difficult to obtain. For this reason, many churches meet in public halls, office buildings, hotel conference rooms or shopping centers – often without the required permission.

Muslim residents in Banten province have objected to the presence of unregistered church facilities. Observers believe this is the reason behind the recent attacks.

The attacks are part of a growing trend in Jakarta and surrounding areas. Similar incidents occurred in Menteng, southern Jakarta, on April 6; and in Tangerang on March 1. Those incidents also targeted churches meeting in unregistered places of worship.

The angry mob of about 1,000 people that attacked the church in Menteng accused Rev. Nainggolan of holding church services without a permit. The group included 20 members of a local Islamic radical organization called the Front Pembela Islam (FPI), which later claimed it had organized the attack.

Arriving outside the health clinic operated by the Huria Kristen Batak Protestan (HKBP) church, the crowd threw stones through the front windows. Around 200 people then entered the house and destroyed property belonging to the church. Rev. Nainggolan said about 50 million rupiah ($5,300) worth of damage was done to the building and its contents.

Part of the building had been set aside as a health clinic operated by the HKBP church and as an auditorium for wedding receptions, under a permit given by local government. The church also had a separate worship hall, operating with a government permit since 1980.

In November 2003, the church decided to renovate the worship hall and applied for permission to use the health clinic as a temporary facility for church services.

However, local authorities rejected the application, saying the local community had not given their consent to use the clinic as a worship facility under the terms of Decree 137, which governs permission granted to establish churches. Apparently the clinic building had been used once for a Sunday school teachers' meeting.

The head of the local District Society said he received information a few days before the incident indicating that the HKBP clinic would be attacked. He passed the information to local authorities, but no action was taken.

In a separate incident on March first, ten churches which met at the Pujasera shopping center in Tigaraksa, Tangerang, were closed by district authorities. Local Muslim societies had objected because none of the churches had the required permit to worship in buildings designated as shops and offices. They also accused church members of using private homes for cell group meetings during the week.

Yusuf Herawan, district head of Tigaraksa, said he closed the churches at the shopping center to protect them from attack. "People were threatening to destroy and burn these buildings if the churches were not closed," he explained. He confirmed that the churches did not have the required permits.

Several of the churches had applied for permits but were refused. Since the closures, some of the congregations in Tigaraksa have stopped meeting together, while others are still searching for alternative facilities.

Meanwhile, Rev. Nainggolan of HKBP church in Menteng has said he will not demand compensation for damages. "We will only pray and hope the suspects will repent," he told Compass. "But we do ask for freedom to worship."

Church

Nigeria bans televised miracles

Obed Minchakpu

ABUJA, Nigeria (Compass) – Nigeria, Africa's most populous nation, has been troubled with religious and ethnic violence for nearly a decade. Recently, Christian leaders have been confronted with yet another thorny issue to resolve: what constitutes acceptable religious programming for TV and radio.

Beginning April 30, the National Broadcasting Commission of the Nigerian government has banned television and radio broadcasts of Christian programs portraying healings and other kinds of miracles. The move has sparked a sharp debate among church leaders over religious freedom and ethics in evangelism.

"In recent times, religious programs are not packaged in accordance with the NBC code," said Dr. Silas Yisa, director-general of NBC, when announcing the ban. According to the NBC official, a "recent trend in religious broadcast" has created a "problem of credibility to somebody who is young in faith or somebody who does not belong to that faith."

Nigeria's broadcasting code states that religious broadcasts "shall not be presented in a manner to mislead the public" and prohibits its use of expressions such as "magical, miracle or miraculous."

The ban affects 15 television stations that broadcast daily Christian programs to a potential audience of 80 million viewers, in addition to an undisclosed number of radio stations reaching several million more listeners.

Divided stand

The leadership of the Christian community in Nigeria was divided in its stand on the ban. Pentecostal and Charismatic church leaders that use both radio and television as evangelistic tools decried the measure.

"The ban is against our freedom of worship," said Sunday Peters, pastor of Royal Family Church in Lagos. "Miracles are proof of our belief that Jesus is alive and well. Miracles on TV give hope to the hopeless."

"What has the federal government got against televised miracles?" Pastor Femi Emmanuel of Living Spring Chapel in the western city of Ibadan stated at a press conference on May 3. "It is incredible that while the nation is currently grappling to overcome the *sharia* (Islamic law) dilemma, another religious crisis is being provoked with the sanction on Christian programs."

The city of Ikirun, Nigeria welcomes TV evangelist Reinhard Bonnke.

However, some clergy from historic churches expressed support for the broadcast commission ruling.

"If the NBC can hold on tightly to the law, it will curb all this nonsense," Cardinal Olubunmi Okogie, Roman Catholic Archbishop of Lagos, told Compass.

"Most of these miracles are fake," he added. "These people have been distracting people and destroying people's conscience. Their actions have nothing to do with the propagation of the faith. They are rather destroying the faith."

Dr. Sunday Mbang of the Nigerian Methodist Church observed that some TV preachers dwell on miracles just to gain cheap publicity and money.

"Why don't they let us spend time trying to get Christians to be after God's heart? What have miracles got to do with making Christians good people?" he asked.

Christians in Bolivian village ostracized for offending gods

David Miller

ORURO, Bolivia (Compass) — Quechua-speaking villagers in Bolivia are living under an uneasy truce two months after an irate mob destroyed the sole evangelical church in their remote Andean community.

Community officials in Chucarasi have signed an accord with members of the local congregation of the Church of God. In return for pledges from evangelical Christians to "respect" traditional customs, their animist neighbors have agreed to allow them to continue to hold worship services in the community. However, the Church of God will not be allowed to rebuild its demolished chapel.

A rural community of 300 people in the department (state) of Potosi 100 miles southeast of Ururo, Chucarasi is inhabited by indigenous farmers, the majority of whom follow the animist religious traditions of their Inca forebears.

Christians bring evil

Conflict erupted in the community in late February following the celebration of Carnaval, a festival the village customarily observes with Christo-pagan rituals, dancing and heavy drinking. Since converting to evangelical Christianity several years ago, members of the Church of God in Chucarasi have declined to take part in Carnaval celebrations.

When a severe hail storm struck the village two days after the festival, animist villagers became convinced that evil spirits were punishing the community for allowing the Christians to abandon tradition.

Townspeople attacked Church of God elder Fortunato Bernal and beat him unconscious. Later the same evening, they completely dismantled the congregation's adobe chapel with picks and wrecking bars. (See Compass Direct report, "Angry Mob Destroys Church in Bolivian Andes," March 8)

Village leaders later insisted that the evangelical believers either renounce their faith or leave the community.

"The whole town rose up like a tiger against us – everybody, as one man," Gregorio Conde, the farmer-evangelist who introduced evangelical Christianity to the village in 1997, told Compass.

Military mediates

Conde and Bernal traveled to Oruro to alert denominational leaders of the crisis. In response, police, military and judiciary officials joined representatives of Churches United, an ecumenical association representing Oruro's evangelical community, to form a special commission that visited Chucarasi on March 9 to negotiate a settlement.

"It would have been very helpful if we could have exchanged ideas and explained how the thing that happened was simply a normal occurrence of nature, but it was impossible to get a hearing," said Victor Quispe, national president of Church of God. "The only one who spoke was the army commander, so the rest of us prayed that God would use that man, and that's what happened."

Colonel Luis Morales, commander of a local army base who arrived with a squadron of soldiers, managed to convince Chucarasi leaders to heed the negotiators.

"I am here to see that the constitution of Bolivia is respected," Col. Morales told community elders, "and you must respect the religious freedom of the evangelicals. If not, we will take the five people into custody whose names are in the police report (regarding the February 28 attack). But I don't want any violence."

Quispe said village leaders deliberated from 11:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. before signing the document that guarantees evangelicals the right to live in the community and continue holding Sunday services.

Church won't be rebuilt

The agreement also stipulates that Church of God members must contribute quotas of food and money to community festivals. Furthermore, it expressly prohibits the congregation from reconstructing its demolished chapel.

"There will never again be another evangelical church here," one village elder reportedly vowed during the discussions.

In the interests of avoiding more violence, the commission did not press the issue. Nor did security officers move to arrest the five men accused of leading the attack on the church. "We decided to forgive them," Conde said.

Due to community pressure, he said, three baptized members of the congregation have declared their intention to leave the evangelical faith and return to animist practice. Conde and Bernal are not among them.

"We declared in the meeting that, although we might die for it, we are going to follow Christ," Conde said. "We have vowed to serve the Lord and will never give up."

The Church of God in Chucarasi numbers 36 baptized members and an average of 64 in attendance at weekly worship. Three years ago, the congregation built the adobe chapel that was demolished on February 28.

Conde said believers observed a three-day fast during Holy Week, praying for community reconciliation. Despite the recent setback, they are going forward with plans to celebrate the annual junta (camp meeting), which draws several hundred evangelical believers to Chucarasi in late August for two days of open air worship.

"We are going to prepare for our junta on August 30," Andres Pedro, the congregation's pastoral deacon, told Compass. "You are invited to attend."

Quispe added, "The brothers and sisters remain firm in the faith, and I am certain that sometime in the not-too-distant future, the whole town will be worshiping the Lord."

Short Story

Spring thaw

Katherine Kendall

Angel is happy the ride is ending. Technically I am driving. I have driven to the top of the mountain and soon we will stop and walk down. It has been cold for so long.

"The winter is almost over," I explain to her.

She switches on the heat.

"We're high on the mountain, Angel. High as we can go."

"Seems like the higher we go, the warmer it should get."

"It's the earth that's warm, not the sky."

The road is narrowing and becoming more rocks than gravel. "I think I've made a wrong turn." Not that the road isn't familiar to me, but I often make this mistake. I think I am going one way and it turns out to be the same wrong road. This road is a dead end. It twists and turns all over the mountain but leads nowhere.

"Let's get out then, and stretch our legs."

It is spring today. The dogwoods are delicious, like white and pink candy in a blue batter. Yesterday winter ruled the earth. Bold knights bloomed on the battlefield of white, the daffodil and crocus, impaled in snow. Today the sun is out. The grip of winter is weakening; the frozen water is melting and bleeding into the earth. And my grip too, is weakened. I am on my last gasp. This day will be the end of me, the end of my hopes and my dreams.

"What makes it a wrong turn?"

"That road ends."

"Oh."

Angel's legs are long and shapely. Her figure is a full set of wings, the angel of despair I secretly call her. She is a slender bell, ringing freedom. Her bones are small. My one arm could hold three of her around her waist. She turns her head and sees me watching her. She smiles. She lies, "I didn't see that the road ended."

I shrug. "When a road goes from pavement to gravel to rocks and becomes more narrow with each turn as it climbs the mountain, people have given up on that road. That road is too hard. Someone made an easier one somewhere."

My voice clips and cuts.

"We can move into town," Angel says quietly. "We don't have to live all alone on a mountaintop like the Waltons, who we'll never be."

I slam the car door.

"Good can come from bad." She says the words of life.

"Yes."

I look down the mountain for nearly a quarter of a mile. Everywhere wisteria chokes the giraffe-like necks of towering pines, their violet clusters dripping over the bushy limbs like foam. Dull yellow eyes of pollen look complacently back at me. Cut me free, the pines whisper.

As we walk a raucous spring stream rushes by, patches of neon-green grass and tiny wild violets riot at its edges.

"It looks like there's a foot path here. We could go down a ways. What do you think?"

"We got some time." I trip over a graveyard of tree limbs that lie naked on the ground; a blanket of snow covers them no more. I pick up a bone-white fallen limb and ram it against a rotting tree.

"Woody," Angel calls my name as the dead tree screams pain, it's body thumping down the mountain, like a Vaudeville act. "You are strong."

"That tree was dead anyway or I wouldn't have hit it like that."

"No, I know you wouldn't. You are a strong man but you are not a cruel man."

Decomposed wood, musty dust, and mildew bite my nose, and linger in the air. She sneezes, such odors do not penetrate her. It is cruel to think the hopeless can live beside the hopeful. Today I realize I should have known better than to think I could fulfill her.

"You could've knocked that one down."

"Let's talk about how we met," she says. "It was the fall."

"Was it the fall? I thought it was the summer."

"It was the summer that we met but you fell in love with me in the fall."

Angel fell in love. For me, it was logic. I thought she was the best thing that could ever happen to me. It was all a lie, I tell myself. I have learned to listen to her. She is saying, "...and I called you Woody because the trees in the fall turn their leaves orange and red, and your red hair and beard and everything, I thought, he's like a big oak tree come to life."

Oak trees around here never turn orange because they haven't the sweetness in them to do it. Angel can look at a forest and never see that there are so many different kinds of trees in it, not just big strong ones. I am an oak tree because she wills it. Her power is stronger than mine is, it comes after mine, like spring comes after winter, and never looks back to see me. What does it matter? Why should I care what she thinks I am? Then I see her feet dancing the come hither dance. She is in my arms, an ocean of tears undulating, eroding me so that my dead limbs will fall. She is spring and I am winter.

"Why do you always get so mad?" she asks. "All the sudden, and there you are, all hunched over and mad and everything, and I don't know what I did. I'm sorry. I'm sorry. I'm sorry."

Rivulets of water lacerate the mountain, gush down the rocks in waterfalls, converging into rivers. These are the arteries of the earth that push soft silt into the fertile valleys below where the harvest will grow. Listening, I wonder if the spring thaw is painful to the earth. She sucks tension. Her thoughts are simple; no darkness is in her to give rise to the imagination. I stroke her soft head, the color of the sun on water, and tell her it is all forgiven. Why do I get so mad, she asks. Was I mad? Did I yell? What did I do? A little irritated with this reminiscing.

I couldn't believe that she actually loved me. We met shortly after my dad died. Angel saw my pain. It was the first thing she saw. As much as she says that she thirsts after the unknown, it's the familiar that attracts her.

"I knew I wanted to marry you the minute I saw you. I just loved watching you. I could tell just what you were like. I could tell you were like me." She is back to playing this game of making things real.

"Like you, how so?" Cut, cut, chop, chop.

"Well, maybe not like me, but good for me. You were good. You are a good man. You're just good." She peeks up at me. "I am not as good as you." She reaches for me and gently pulls me to the ground. She brings me to a point where I do not want to go. "You are really good," she smiles.

I'd spent the summer after graduating college as a camp counselor. A last fling at childhood, really, spoiled for me late in July by my father's sudden death. Afterwards, I returned for the last week of camp and there was Angel. I had not seen her before. Though she said she'd been there for several weeks, that morning she walked out from the fog, an apparition stepping into fragile and misty light. She was a shadow. I made her up. I started talking to her about anything, just to keep her from fading away beside me, evaporating into the fog. As I was listening to myself and looking at her, I was thinking, shut up, will you just shut up? Then, I stumbled over my feet and my hand fell across her solid back, unshaken she stood there, smiling up at me. She was an apple in hand. So, I kissed her.

I lay beside her and let her wash over me. I smile. I want her to feel pain, so I am tender. I kiss her softly, in a way that I know she likes. I want to see pain etched on her face like she can see it on mine. She is a loyal pet. She cocks her head at me. My marriage to Angel makes me a very patient man, a fine quality I never imagined I'd end up having.

I could hold her so she can't move. I can stop time. I can make her mine forever but I'm frightening her. We could live a lifetime of winter. Today, for giving in to her, I reason there'd be something good to remember and perhaps, when she looks back on this day, it might hurt her. Afterwards, she rises up. I look at her beauty and know that I am the one who will remember this day. The ground clutches me with cold wet fingers, and I think, fly away Angel. I am letting you go.

The sun is waning, a sequin on the blue septum that stretches over the earth. Its light shatters through the woods. Birds watch us. By this time of day, a heavy summer sun would pale the sky. I cannot rise from my sepulchre. I am rooted to the ground. "You must pull me up," I laugh. I do not want to stop with her, but my laughter is what hurts her. She has known all along what love has meant to me.

It never matters how gentle or cruel I am to her. She is a cup I will never fill. I hadn't thought about that loyal, pet-like quality of hers until now. Angel is blindly loyal. Loyalty to her is essential. It's what keeps her alive. It's what makes her free to believe anything she wants to believe, or in nothing.

"What are we going to do? Where are we going to go?" Her voice is a little panicky. It is getting late for us. She stands at my feet as I lie on the ground with her shadow falling across me. She is a dark form in front of me.

"You could sell the mountain and then we'd have plenty of

Short Story

money and we could be lazy all our lives," she says. I am never lonely on my mountain. In winter with the cold wind lashing and the bare trees moaning, even then I never feel lonely. I've lived on this mountain all my life, like my father and my grandfather. I don't need her.

I sit up and I can feel the muscles in my arms ache with cramps from wanting to pick her up and take her back to my dream world of many children, apple pie and a long life as a grandfather. She would slip away of course, evaporate into the air if I tried to do that. I must let her go. I am tired and weary of her. She is an empty theater of dreams, a burden to me. I divorce thee, I divorce thee, I divorce thee.

She sees my dark thoughts and runs ahead. I follow in silence to the bottom of the mountain, where she sits beside the river. I see her looking over the river like she can rise up and float across it. I want to anchor her but I can't. I am a dead end.

She turns, bends her head down and looks at the ground. She pulls the grass, the neon green stuff that grows everywhere. Her eyes grow dark and mean. "I hate this life," she says.

I feel my throat grow sore and bitter. All day I have walked around with a sore throat. I want to give up and start something new. I hadn't let myself think like that till now but I know it is true. "Please, forgive me. Please."

"Yes, always I forgive you," she says.

"I want God to forgive me."

"He forgives you. Always." It is funny how she understands this. "I shame you," her voice is syrup. She puts her head in her hands and coughs up bitter sobs. It scares me.

I put my hand over hers and say, "Don't think about it. It doesn't matter."

"When the doctor told me about you, I thought of my nephew's birth." She wipes her eyes to look at me to speak of the only birth she ever attended, "There was this burst of scent in the air like when you open an orange and the orange smell bursts out. It was the baby's own scent just like everyone has a particular smell."

I see now she is hurt and I wish I hadn't wanted to see her pain. It is horrible and she keeps wiping the tears. She is explaining why she understands and I am listening carefully, "I think if there is a heaven and I go there, that's what it will smell like cause I long for that smell the way I should long for heaven."

Angel is exhausted. She stops crying and takes off her shoes. Her feet are small like a child's. She digs them into the mud.

"What?" I ask. She mumbles something. Already, she sounds far away though she still sits beside me.

"I love you."

"You can say good-bye. I will understand."

It is getting late. The sun is bruising the sky. A long time ago she could have been my vessel of pain. Once I could have blamed her, called her barren, but knowledge is a biting serpent. I feel her small hand graft itself into mine. She is not leaving me after all. The darkness in me had only imagined it. I feel like I am cracking. Rivulets of tears are rushing through me.

We watch the sun go down into the river. There is something beautiful in the end of the day. When we walk back up the mountain in the darkness, we both know that something small and stupid has been left behind.

Back at the top, Angel walks a crooked line, as if she is dizzy. I see that she is looking up at the stars as she walks. Only the imagination can give reason to such an awesome sight as the night sky at the top of my mountain. Looking upwards, I realize that most of what I knew about her I made up, even this sudden change of loosing her wings, of her falling to the ground beside me. She has not really changed. Only I have changed: I have decided to love a fallen angel.

History

D-Day and "the greatest generation"

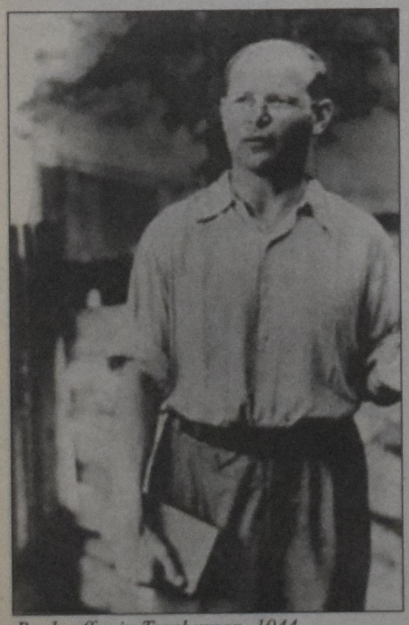
Harry der Nederlanden

"The greatest generation" Tom Brokaw called the men who splashed ashore on the beaches of Normandy 60 years ago against one of the greatest war machines the world has ever seen. Brokaw was probably thinking only of the American troops, but I'm sure he wouldn't deny the honorary epithet to the English, Polish, French, Dutch and Canadian troops who accompanied them in their assault on the fortified Western Wall of the German defenses.

After 60 years we may be pardoned for a little hype about the sacrifices of those men, the youngest of whom are now at least 78 years old. One is, however, tempted to say that it would have been an even greater generation had they found a way to avoid another world war. But that wasn't their doing. The blame belongs to an earlier generation, which had learned too little from an earlier world war.

Of course, Brokaw called these men "the greatest generation" not just for their achievements on the battlefield (and not just in Europe but also in the Pacific theatre). He was also referring to what they did after the war – to the energy, moral direction and discipline they invested in their communities and in their country and in the reconstruction of the defeated countries. They "kept the faith," upholding in the main the principles for which so many of their buddies lay down their lives on distant battlefields.

That was also the message of the Tom Hanks movie, *Saving Private Ryan*. All of us, said the film, are Private Ryans – saved by those who interposed their bodies between us and this threat to all that is good and true in Western civilization. And their sacrifice lays upon us the duty to keep on doing good, to uphold freedom and justice and all the core values they died for.



Bonhoeffer in Tegel prson, 1944

Unloading operations off the beach-head of Normandy, June 6,1944.(Public Archives Canada 33962)

Defending Christian civilization

In England and America quite a few of the young men who returned from the war went on to university and put a lot of thought into trying to spell out just what it was they had fought to defend. Were they just slogans crafted for the occasion? It's amazing how many books were published after the war with the word "civilization" or "Christian civilization" in the title.

Yet, we must not think that Western values had suddenly been clarified and purified by the war to establish a noble unanimity. After all, fascism and communism were no less products of Western culture than democracy and capitalism. It is sobering to recall that for many months after Hitler had begun extending the boundaries of his Third Reich and long after Americans had learned that he was sacrificing people by the trainload to his gods of fire, iron and racial purity, Americans were content to let Europeans resolve their own quarrels.

In view of this earlier detachment, it is nothing short of miraculous how quickly it became a war to save freedom, democracy and Christian civilization. When did the clarity come? When the Germans sank the Lusitania? When Japan bombed Pearl Harbor?

World War II was a dramatic overarching story that has attained moral clarity largely in hindsight. Several years ago I met a fellow who was still picking away at war scars almost forty years later. Although a member of the Reformed Church, his father had been an enthusiastic supporter of National Socialism and Hitler. His moment of clarity came when he learned what was happening to the Jews. By then, however, the stigma had been stamped indelibly on his reputation.

It's nice to think that all those men and boys storming the beaches into a hail of artillery and gunfire were ready to sacrifice themselves for the sake of high ideals. But it's not likely. Most were there because they were part of something larger than themselves that they did not wholly comprehend.

Moral clarity

Some understood quite early what it was all about. There are, of course, many more stories to be told than the stories of those who spilled out of the landing craft on the beaches or out of airplanes behind enemy lines. Many of the most heroic stories happened before and after D-day. Many happened far from the front lines. Many of the heroes were not soldiers and never received medals. Some were even Germans.

When the Allies landed at Normandy, Dietrich Bonhoeffer had already been in prison for a year for taking part in a plot against Hitler's life. In prison he ministered tirelessly and heroically to his fellow prisoners. He was clear very early about the threat posed by Nazism; yet, leaving the safety of England in 1935, he returned to Germany to engage them on their own turf, knowing full well he was risking his life.

Another German pastor, Helmut Thielicke, although forbidden by the Nazis from speaking, courageously continued to lecture – on worldview topics, of all things – while the Allied bombs rained down on his parish in Stuttgart, reducing homes and churches to rubble. When one location was destroyed, he moved to another. Hundreds came to hear his words of hope, among them even conscripted Dutch laborers. He knew the war was not just decided by planes and tanks but first of all by the Word. He was already reconstructing hearts and minds.

The news of D-day raised hopes in the hearts of occupied and imprisoned peoples all over Europe. Nowhere more fiercely than in the attic where Anne Frank was hiding with her mother and father. And in thousands of other hiding places. And in concentration camps and prisons crammed with tired but courageous people.

Many, like Anne Frank and Bonhoeffer, celebrated D-day but never saw their day of liberation. Two of my uncles were among them. I never got to know them, because they were executed for hiding and providing for Jews and others sought by the Nazis. They were taken out and shot when the day of liberation was almost in sight.

The ordinary heroes

They were heroes, but so were those who resisted the Nazis in a thousand little ways – by publishing resistance newspapers and simply by refusing to recognize their legitimacy. Every day in small ways

they insisted that the German Reich would never rule them because it was false.

My mother and father got married shortly after The Netherlands was overrun, and they started a family under the Nazi occupation – an act of faith and hope surely. They never hid people in their own home, but they tended to the needs of men hiding in the attic of the bathhouse next door, right over the heads of German soldiers bathing below.

Like the boys who somehow found the courage to charge ashore into fierce enemy fire, the heroes who resisted Nazi tyranny were mostly ordinary people who found themselves doing ordinary things that now involved great risk. They found the courage to do them, usually out of a deep faith. If you didn't have faith in those days, you took the easy path.

When the war began, Pieter Strayer, the father of Ineke Medcalf, who does our layout, ads and books, was a young man in his early twenties, who was happy being a truck driver on one of the islands of Zeeland. As a truck driver, he soon found himself in the employ of the Germans. He actually had it pretty good, for he got the same food as the German soldiers.

One of his early jobs was picking up the bodies, many badly mangled, of English and German airmen who washed ashore on the island. The first photograph he ever saw of Canada was of a newly married couple standing in front of their house in Hamilton, Ontario. He found it in the pocket of one of the bodies that he hauled away in his truck.

As he worked for the Germans, he picked up information useful to the Allies and passed it on. He was told not to trust anyone. "Your friends are your biggest enemy. If you let your family and friends know what you're doing, you're placing them in danger. So be careful what you say to them."

His access to a truck and his German permit gave him a lot of freedom of movement, and soon he was smuggling supplies for the underground. He got a lot of help from Armenians who had been drafted into the German army but who did everything possible to sabotage them.

After the D-day landing, his job got tougher. He hauled food for the German soldiers only at night, because any truck moving during daylight hours was liable to get shot up by Allied fighters. He passed along maps stolen from German officers.

Torpedo boats

When he discovered that Burghsluis was being used as a base for one-man torpedo boats that were sinking Allied ships ferrying supplies to the troops, he passed that information on. And when Allied fighters destroyed the harbor and the torpedo boats, he reported that the mission had been successful.

After hauling large rubber rafts to a location across the water from the Canadian lines the day before Christmas, he figured the Germans were planning a surprise attack on Christmas eve. Pretending he had to stop to make repairs on his truck, he passed the information on. When he went back to pick the boats up again, there were a lot fewer to transport.

Once, when he was driving two German officers in his truck, they speculated that someone must be passing along information. All their plans seemed to go wrong. Someone must have tipped off the Allies about the Christmas eve mission.

"There's a lot of spying going on," said one of them. "They told us to be on the lookout for someone who is a truck driver and whose code name is Piet."

"I'm a truck driver and my name is Piet," Pieter said drily.

They laughed. "A spy wouldn't use his real name!"

These are just a few of the things Pieter Strayer, an ordinary fellow, did during the war. And he continued to do them even after a half-dozen of his friends were hung for doing much less and after their homes were burned to the ground and their families left homeless. He, too, was a hero.

"So many times in the war you were miraculously spared and you uttered "a fast shot of prayer," as the Catholics put it. You knew that your life was always in the hands of your Maker. That was something you could never forget."

Hiding Allied pilots

Intangible Things

Heidi VanDerSlikke

Celebrating Father's Day

Few things in life inspire me more than a June morning. The scent of dew on the freshly cut grass wafts in through the bedroom window. From the maple behind our house a robin greets the day in song. His music reminds me of my father.

Sunrise was Dad's favorite time of day, and he loved robins best of all the birds. "They rise early, work late and mate for life," he used to say, "Just like me."

Tempting as it is to turn over and go back to sleep, I don't want to miss any of this early summer morning. I rise and peer out the window at my safe little world, this farm of ours.

It's been 28 years since I spent Father's Day with my dad. As a kid I thought he would always be there. My mind stretches back to the night I learned it wouldn't be so.

Like most 18-year-olds I faced the transition from adolescence to adulthood with mixed emotions. The tantalizing promise of things to come mingled sweetly with the desire to cling to the familiar. As I stepped into the hospital elevator I thought of my father's broad shoulders and comforting smile, always my refuge in uncertain times.

The doors opened to reveal the third floor nurses' station. A sanitized world of hushed voices and medical personnel in white uniforms awaited my reluctant arrival. Down the hall a grim-faced doctor came out from my father's room. He nodded perfunctorily as our paths crossed.

My father sat upright, staring vacantly out the window at the evening cityscape. He barely acknowledged me as I kissed his forehead and sat down beside him on the bed. Silence shrouded the room. Minutes dragged by before I felt Dad's large, calloused hand enfold mine. He fixed his steel blue eyes on my face and swallowed. "The doctors say it's cancer, Heidi. They figure at most I've got six months to live."

Tears streamed silently down his cheeks. I wept out loud. He gathered me into his arms and held me against his chest, as he had when I was a little girl terrified by a bad dream. I longed to wake up from the nightmare at hand.

After awhile Dad drew a ragged breath and talked about his homecoming scheduled for the week's end. He didn't want my mother to hear the news until he could be there for her. As I stood to leave he reached up and stroked my cheek. "There'll be lots of time to cry later on," he murmured, "For now we still have some days together. Let's not waste them by worrying about what's to come."

Once outside I inhaled the cold autumn air, eager to rid my nostrils of the hospital's antiseptic grip. Driving home I reflected on the warmth of my father's hand, the steadiness of his voice and the depth of his eyes. I ached at the prospect of losing him. Then I considered the wisdom of his words. He was right. The days ahead would be singularly precious. I wouldn't allow worries about the future to steal them from me.

Dad came home from the hospital on his birthday, November 6. Christmas that year was difficult, but bittersweet. In January my parents had their 29th wedding anniversary. Days, weeks and months marched on as they always had, each special occasion marked by a sadness we coped with, but could not overcome.

The following June I went shopping for a Father's Day gift. It was obvious that Dad wouldn't be with us much longer, but I was determined to treasure the time we had left. I bought him a new pair of pajamas and a novel, even though he was too weak to read more than a page at a time. As I wished him a happy Father's Day he smiled weakly. "Couldn't have done it without you," he said.

A couple of weeks later, just as the robin broke the silence of a July morning, my father passed away.

Soon it will be Father's Day 2004. I won't be seeing my dad. But I will be visiting my father-in-law, who's been a dad to me for the past 26 years. My kids will be home to celebrate with the wonderful father God gave them. I'll think of my dad and the last Father's Day we spent together. And I'll give wholehearted thanks to my Heavenly Father for all the special people and precious moments he sends me every day of my life.

Heidi VanderSlikke lives in Harriston, Ont. Her email: hmvanderslikke@hotmail.com

Prayer

Our Father in Heaven

J.H. Sillevis Smitt
Translated by Jack Van Meggelen

The Prayer of the Spinner by Gerrit Dou (1613-1675)

Translator's foreword:

This little book on the Lord's Prayer is among the most beautiful books on prayer I know. It is like a mountain climber's guide, providing a route without detours, and offering only the essentials for our walk in faith. It is focused and never waivers from leading us away from our old self and towards a new beginning in a life of obedience to God.

The original was written sometime in the late 1940's. I have used the 5th edition which I obtained early in the 1960's.

The original work does not give any textual references, nor does it quote Bible texts (other than in the body of the work without any further comments); I have supplied the references and in most cases the text, for easy reference.

I have made surprisingly few "updates" in the translation of the text to accommodate a new age and a new world. The original was distilled to reflect only the inner truths of the message and had not 'aged' appreciably.

Where necessary, I considered the need of the current reader to understand, rather than the exact wording or image that the author used. I have done so for clarity, and trust that the author would have agreed if he had been in a position to give assent.

Those who have access to the original text will find that it is faithfully and completely rendered into contemporary English.

Going into your Inner Room

Jesus once told his disciples to go into the inner room. This small room, in a middle eastern home, could be locked from the inside. One could be alone there, alone with God.

Jesus frequently urged his companions to seek this being-alone-with-God in their lives, to go into their 'inner room'.

We can't truly serve God without silence. If we remain immersed in the rat race of our daily lives we will become completely absorbed by it. One of the greatest enemies of a vibrant spiritual life is the modern claim, too quickly made, "I don't have time." Today, people are afraid of 'wasting time'. But the quickest, most effective way to waste a lot of time is failing to make time for God, and for prayer. Time spent in our 'inner room' pays rich dividends.

I think I know why Jesus urged his friends to find quiet time with God. People seem to fear being alone. The reason for this may be twofold. We are afraid of being by ourselves, and we are afraid of being alone with God. Intuitively we know that we cannot escape from ourselves for long, nor is it easy to hide from God in our 'inner room'. There we are confronted both with our own self, and with our God. Paradoxically, something in us longs for such an encounter but, at the same time, something in our very soul seems to drive us to endless activity in order to avoid it. Therefore Jesus tells us to go into our 'inner room', and if we follow his advice we will reap rich benefits. We will find and recognize in our deepest self what we all need most, peace of heart.

Our 'inner room' can be an oasis in the desert, and when we meet God we experience a foretaste of heaven on earth. With never-ending astonishment we will proclaim again and again that we did not know God could be so kind so patient, so gracious, so completely satisfying for all our needs. Guilt and fear, restlessness and irritation disappear from the struggling heart. Anyone who finds God, finds life!

But happiness does not come cheap. In our 'inner room' we get to know our true self in the mirror of Jesus' perfection. That can cause some very unpleasant moments. Things we have almost forgotten come back to haunt us with frightful clarity and painful memory. Things we have pushed out of our memory return to the spotlight of our consciousness.

The 'inner room' has no emergency exit. Once we are caught we cannot escape. Our choice is either to bend or break. That is the place where God's Spirit moves us to surrender to him.

At first we're afraid of radical surrender, only to discover later that in the very surrendering we find our happiness. Our heart does not find true peace, until it finds peace in God.

Something else happens in our 'inner room'. I believe that we are so busy trying to escape our inner self because we are aware of our fear, we know deep down that we desperately need to change, but we really don't want any basic transformation in our lives. But once we are alone with God, and submit to him, change will occur inevitably.

The Bible tells us that it is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. That is true. But it is equally true that it is wonderful to fall into the hands of the living God. The hands of God are frightfully strong, but they are also delightfully strong. They are not only strong, they are also tender, and with that patient tenderness the Lord's hands clean and bandage the wounds which we receive in the battles of life.

But these same hands of God also bend our stubborn ego to do his bidding. The hardest spots of our soul will be melted through experiencing his love. We may jealously guard from exposure those areas that caused our greatest misery, but by his love they will melt away.

The confrontation with God will cleanse and strengthen us. The intimate relationship with God which can now begin will satisfy and renew us.

Out of the leftovers and pieces of our old cantankerous self, which were about to crumble and disintegrate anyway, the Lord will build us into a new person. We will be happy and thankful that we have finally found peace. Then we will also begin to reflect his image.

Is it 'Natural' to Pray?

Prayer is the breath of the soul. Breath is natural and essential. Try to stop breathing and your system will take over automatically, quite independent of your will.

One of the most beautiful experiences in life is watching a child at prayer. A child prays without reservation, and considers prayer natural and normal. But we, as adults who have become such con artists when it comes to sincerity, face all kinds of problems when we want to pray.

That should not surprise us. When we pray we usually fold our hands and close our eyes. Often we bow our heads or kneel by our bedside. These are all symbolic gestures. To a child these are all natural expressions, but for our ego, our stubborn and haughty heart, this is less agreeable. Folding our hands expresses begging; bowing our heads represents submission and resignation. To kneel is to admit that we are not masters, but servants, and by closing our eyes we acknowledge that we do not trust ourselves to seek our own fortune.

We grown-ups are often our own worst enemies. We insist on sitting in the driver's seat of our own life. No wonder Jesus said over and over again that we must become like little children in order to enter the Kingdom of Heaven.

If we ever expect to amount to anything, it has to be on this premise: that God be God and that we stay human. That *he* be great and we stay humble. That we let *him* be the King, and we the servants. That we let *him* be the Father, and we his children. That *he* be powerful and we weak.

However, as we grow up we often lose the ability to be natural, and guileless. As our ego expands, our prayer life often suffers and can only regain its rightful place when we become childlike and humble before God, folding our hands, bowing our heads, and bending our knees.

One day, possibly early in the morning, the disciples unexpectantly witnessed Jesus praying. They quietly stayed in the background for they sensed that they were standing on holy ground. What they observed was real prayer. Alive, trusting, conquering prayer. Their own prayers were listless and flat whereas, by comparison, Jesus was praying in spirit and in truth. When Jesus returned to them they asked him wisely and reverently, "Lord, teach us to pray".

In response Jesus gave them the words of a prayer that has since then been known as the Lord's Prayer:

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our debts,
as we also have forgiven our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from the evil one.
[for yours is the kingdom
and the power and the glory,
forever, Amen]
Matthew 6:9-13

English Translation copyright © 2004, Jack Van Meggelen

This translation of *Onze Vader die in the Hemelen Zijt* by J.H. Sillevis Smitt (No date) is published with the kind permission from Uitgeverij Voorhoeve in Kampen, the Netherlands. This is the introduction. Several more chapters will follow, one for each clause of the Lord's Prayer.

Handle with Care

Sonya VanderVeen Feddema

The ultrasound technician pointed at the screen. "Do you see those five white spots?" She asked. "Those are the tips of the baby's fingers."

I looked in amazement at the image of my 4-month-old unborn baby, awestruck by her tiny hands – hands that I hoped would imitate the actions of God's loving hands and accomplish much good in his world.

In The Return of the Prodigal Son: A Story of Homecoming, Henri J.M. Nouwen describes the father's hands in Rembrandt's painting by the same name. He writes, "The true center of Rembrandt's painting is the hands of the father. On them all the light is concentrated.... In them mercy becomes flesh; upon them forgiveness, reconciliation, and healing come together.... Gradually over the years I have come to know those hands. They have held me from the hour of my conception, they welcomed me at my birth, held me close to my mother's breast, fed me, and kept me warm. They have protected me in times of danger and consoled me in times of grief. They have waved me goodbye and always welcomed me back. Those hands are God's hands. They are also the hands of my parents, teachers, friends, healers, and all those whom God has given me to remind me how safely I am held" (Doubleday, 1994, pp. 96).

God calls Christian parents to imitate the actions of his loving, merciful, nurturing, and disciplining hands. He handles his children with care. Christian parents can do no less for their kids.

How can we accomplish this?

First, daily hand your children over to God. Our kids learn to trust us to supply all their needs; we may trust the Father for all theirs. Sometimes our children help us to understand what handing over control entails. When 5-year-old Davita and I walked to school, she squeezed her eyes shut against the bitter, stinging wind. Taking my hand firmly in hers, she asked me to guide her. She knew I would take care of her even though she couldn't see where she was going. I would never lead her to dangerous places. In the same way, we may put our hands into the Father's hands and release our children to him. Because we know his character, we believe that he will work for their good.

The Return of the Prodigal Son *by Rembrandt c.1669.*

Second, give your kids a hand just as God constantly aids you. Not only did he provide for our spiritual needs by giving us Jesus as our Savior and the Holy Spirit as our Counsellor, he gives us what we need to live on the earth: air, water, food, shelter, human contact, work, and much more besides. David says, "You open your hand and satisfy the desires of every living thing" (Psalm 145:16). By following God's example, we learn how to give our kids a hand. Think of all the opportunities God has given you to use your hands for the well-being of your children: turning the pages of books as you read to them, chopping fresh vegetables for their supper, embracing them, spooning up their medicine, driving them to church, repairing their bikes, and wiping away their tears. The list is endless.

Not only can we learn from God how to give our children a hand. Sometimes our kids show us how to be helpful. Four-year-old Davita began to cry because her brother Jason had left for school without kissing her goodbye. When I told Davita to blow a kiss to him in the distance, she refused and cried louder. Twelve-year-old Tamara offered to help. "Kiss my hand and I'll bring the kiss to him," she said. Davita and I watched at the window as Tamara sprinted down the sidewalk to Jason. She pressed her hand against his cheek, delivering the kiss. Davita's face beamed.

Third, take your children in hand just as God disciplines his children. King David describes God's discipline in this way: "For day and night your hand was heavy upon me" (Psalm 32:4a). The reason God corrects us is to work for our good so "that we may share in his holiness" (Hebrews 12:10b). When things get out of hand in our kids' lives, we are called to take the situation in hand and correct them in the same spirit that God disciplines us. Perhaps we need to ask ourselves several questions to gauge how faithful we are to God's intent for discipline. Am I punishing my child because I'm in a bad mood or because I want to show him who's boss? Am I doing so because a certain aspect of his character irritates me? Do the consequences I am meting out fit the offense and will they teach him something constructive? Am I demolishing his self-esteem or am I conveying the message that I love him and have his ultimate well-being in mind? Have I explained the reason why I am punishing him and the dangers I am trying to protect him from? Healthy, God-honoring discipline doesn't make our children bitter, as Paul warns against in Colossians 3:21, and provides boundaries in which they flourish. Sometimes years pass before they recognize and acknowledge the love that motivated our discipline. One of my children wrote this note in a Mothers Day card: "Thanks for putting up with me through my highschool years. You're the best."

Fourth, keep a hand in your children's lives – persevere no matter what happens – just as God has steadfastly loved humanity. From the day his "own hand laid the foundations of the earth, and (his) right hand spread out the heavens" (Isaiah 48:13a), he has upheld his creation, including his children. From the time he took Moses and the Israelites out of Egypt with "a mighty hand" (Exodus 13:3b) till Jesus told the Pharisees, "I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand" (John 10: 28), he has been faithful. And he still is.

Even on days when we want to throw up our hands in despair and wash our hands of our parenting responsibilities, we are called to persist. I have discovered a helpful way to do so which has lightened my load and heightened my joy. Instead of expecting earth-shaking progress in my kids' lives, I watch for small signs of growth. As Nouwen also points out in The Return of the Prodigal Son, "I don't have to wait until all is well, but I can celebrate every little hint of the Kingdom that is at hand" (pp. 115). After a troublesome, stressful period, a child's goodbye wave, kind word, smile, apology, or helping hand, though seemingly insignificant, are hints of the Kingdom for parents who struggle to persevere in love, mercy, and hope.

Our children know our hands. Maybe they aren't acutely aware of our hands' physical characteristics like 13-year-old Ian was aware of his father's farmwork-roughened hands in Eugenie Doyle's novel Stray Voltage: "His father's amazing hands moved about the table feeding himself. Huge knuckles, nails dark, thick fingers, palms creased with deep black lines, maps of exploration of rough, dirty places....Ian was in awe of his hands and what they accomplished in a day"(Front Street, 2002, pp. 75}. But our children see what our hands do. Later, when they remember our hands, may they be in awe of them – in awe, not because of what our hands have done on their behalf, but because through our hands they recognize God's hands.

Join now! Invest in your own community.
We have $10 million in approved loan applications to fund before the year end.

Your funds will be invested in CRC and Christian School building projects in Canada. You'll earn a competitive and fair rate. See the next issue of Christian Courier for rates.

CRC EXTENSION FUND

Christian Reformed Extension Fund
45 Harriet St., Toronto, ON M4L 2G1
Phone: 416-461-1207 Fax: 416-465-6367

Life wisdom

Dear candidate: what will you do about the saskatoon?

Barry Longshot

I'm beginning to agree with the Americans that the Europeans have developed a bad case of the nasties. The latest news from Europe will surely send western Canadians to their armories looking for their pikes and pitchforks. When we get riled, we get wild! It seems that the Europeans are pulling our native saskatoons – a berry that resembles the blueberry – from their shelves.

The authorities over there seem to think the berry might be poisonous. But as children we gobbled them right off the trees. The only risky thing about them was that bears liked them too, so we'd take a few little 4- and 5-year-old neighborhood kids along with us. That way any hungry bear would get the toddler before he could get to us older kids, who were more swift of foot. Their mothers lent them out to us quite willingly. It was a time of large families.

Yes, those were the days when us kids had real survival skills.

The Indians picked saskatoons for hundreds of years before the Europeans came along. And the early settlers even named a city after them – Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. When I hitchhiked between Edmonton and Sioux Center, Iowa, I think the export of saskatoons was still the biggest export industry in that city, which never grew far beyond the confines of the saskatoon patch. Saskatoons and chokecherries were the missile of choice when we were kids. With a section of a hollow-stemmed weed as a blow-gun and a mouthful of berries, you were ready to engage the enemy – usually of the opposite sex. You could use them while they were green, but we preferred ripe ones (the berries, I mean). Then they left a purple stain when they struck the target, proof positive of your excellent marksmanship.

Many a fellow marked his future wife with a well-aimed saskatoon. And if you gave a girl a chokecherry, she'd pucker up no matter how mad she was at you. They're pretty tart (the chokecherries, I mean).

The saskatoon makes the biggest mark when it hits. But the chokecherry travels farther and stings more because it has a large pit in the center. In fact, the chokecherries we picked as kids were 75 percent pit. And we were warned to spit the pits out because they were poisonous. We questioned that warning, however. After we fed a handful to the 4- and 5-year-olds, not a one of them keeled over. Some of them bawled, however, but that was because they didn't like the taste. So, as the scientists say, the experiment was aborted.

What kind of people would ban a berry like that, I ask you? It's a sure sign of the decay and wimpification of Europe.

Some Canadians out east, I've learned, have never even heard of saskatoons or chokecherries. This is sure sign of the failure of our schools. It leaves a huge gap in their knowledge of the history of Canada's westward expansion. What drew the earlier settlers ever farther out beyond the western frontier in Canada was not the eagerness for gunplay like in the American wild west. The Canadian settlers got to picking saskatoons out near the western edge of Ontario, and as they were eating and picking they ventured out farther and farther west till they couldn't make it home again. They gorged themselves on those saskatoons like bears. When they got fat and contented, they'd look for some place to hole up and sleep with a big smile on their purple faces. This helps to explain why the Canadian west was far less violent than the American west.

Neerlandia family berry picking c.1926

I don't know why easterners never heard of them. I suspect that the suppression was deliberate: the boys in Ottawa saw them as a reverse marijuana. Immigrant mothers turned the berries into jam and fed them to their babies. A few helpings of saskatoon jam and those kids were running out the door to go pick the berries for themselves, and they wouldn't even go through a crawling stage. Those berries produced an instant race of independent Canadians that couldn't be managed by Ottawa.

Remember Louis Riel? He grew up in the middle of saskatoon country. Yes, the saskatoon and chokecherry have left an indelible mark on the history and the DNA of Canadians.

If Ottawa fails to launch a vigorous defense of the saskatoon, it ought to be seen as a betrayal of our Canadian heritage. One of the questions you should ask your local candidate is: what will you do for the saskatoon?

Life is difficult, change is difficult

Getting Unstuck

Arlene Van Hove

As the aircraft streaks across the misty morning, I try to remember why I signed up four months ago for a retreat at the other side of the country. It was not a good time to leave my home and I feel exasperated with my "deal with it and do it now" personality.

Irritably I pull my backpack from under the seat in front of me and grope through the contents. I find the yellow folder stuffed full of notes since last fall about what was troubling me. In the back I come across two newspaper articles I clipped out last December. Now I am begin to remember.

The father of all gurus The apostle Paul is the most well-known preacher and theologian who made no bones about "doing what he did not want to do." Still, from the knowledge we have of him from Scripture he lived an exemplary life till the end. The same cannot be said of many preachers, teachers and other people in positions of charge and trust. And now it seems from the clippings Scott Peck's life is up for scrutiny.

Peck has written 12 bestsellers but his book *The Road Less Travelled* has remained and is consistently the most popular. The book has had over 10 million readers and has also caught the interest of upcoming gènerations.

He begins the book with "Life is difficult...(it) is a series of problems. Do we want to moan about them or solve them? Do we want to teach our children to solve them?" Avoiding problems "and the emotional suffering inherent in them," argues Peck, "is the primary basis of all human mental illness." He goes on to lay out some key techniques: discipline, delaying gratification and accepting responsibility.

Change and choice

Robert Epstein, editor of *Psychology Today* was granted one of the few interviews Peck has given in the last few years. He believes the book gives people the belief that we can create a wonderful and positive life for ourselves free from harmful bad habits and personality quirks. Yet, Epstein writes, Peck's own life is peppered with addictive smoking, drinking, experimentation with marijuana during his 40's and 50's, as well as involvement in various extra-marital affairs.

At the same time, Epstein believes that in spite of all of that, Peck is still a vessel through which some good words of wisdom can be expressed. He stresses the author also needs to make his own choices of whether he will live according to his own written words. He also stresses that Peck never held himself up as a role model or as an example.

Change is difficult

What made the *Road Less Travelled* so groundbreaking was that Peck connected spirituality with psychotherapy. And unfortunately, in both cases we often think change is easy to come by.

Joseph Russo, from the California State University spells out the following steps of how people change:

1 - old response
2 - old response
- awareness of old response
3 - old response
- awareness of old response
- dissatisfaction with old response
4 - old response
- awareness of old response
- dissatisfaction with old response
- irritation with self
5 - awkward attempt at new response
- awareness of awkward attempt
- reappraisal and rehearsal (i.e. you think about how you should have responded and how you will try to respond next time)
6 - new response (better this time)
- awareness of new response
- pleased with improvement
- awareness of further room for improvement
- reappraisal and rehearsal
7 - new response (better yet)
- awareness of new response
- pride and satisfaction
- new response is becoming part of your behavior pattern
8 - old response
- awareness of old response (with all of your skill and good intentions there are still those painful moments when you feel helpless and discouraged, and find yourself resorting to old responses)
- accept imperfections
- reappraisal and rehearsal
9 - new response (you continue to experiment and learn)
10 - constructive behavioral change

I all of a sudden remember why I need to go to the retreat. Yes, real change looks difficult and amonious. But more about that in my next column.

Arlene Van Hove is a psychotherapist with Cascade Christian Counselling Association in Surrey, B.C.

Opinion

Yes .... but

Bert Hielema

From the Great Plains to Iraq and Saudi Arabia

A few weeks ago I ran on the prairie a couple of times. Let me correct that: it used to be the prairie when millions of buffaloes roamed the open spaces of Iowa, feeding on that hardy grass that grew everywhere and that kept the deep loam from blowing away, a plant no good for human consumption but ideal for these immense masses of herbivores. That was also when, on occasion, billions of passenger pigeons would darken the skies. I remember reading a book by Audubon, who lived some 150 years ago, and who observed these birds appearing like a sudden thunderstorm, darkening the expanse as far as the eye could stretch, flying past for days on end in flocks of untold billions.

They too are all gone. Not a single one left. An easy prey for greedy humans who killed them for sport and for money: there even was a bounty on them, if I remember correctly. Since they were a congregational animal, unable to exist without the company of their fellow creatures, when their numbers were reduced to a few million, they simply vanished.

These vast, slightly hilly fields of the Midwest, where trees were originally not part of the scenery, at one time provided nutrition for millions of these large animals and billions of these small birds. Now, when I run on these same plains, on the path provided by the college that dominates this small prairie town, I see nothing but cultivated lands.

With the buffalo and the passenger pigeon, that special prairie grass too has been eradicated. Now, thanks to the abundance of rains, that have replenished the water content in the thirsty soil, either corn or soya beans are sprouting. Now, when I run on that narrow concrete path, I can smell the stench coming from the feed lots, where creatures, not unlike the buffaloes in appearance, are penned within muddy enclosures, barely moving, dirty and sullen. They too can be counted in the millions, but there the similarity ends.

These gigantic fields, worked by gigantic tractors, and, once the corn and beans have ripened, harvested by different gigantic machines, provide the feed to fatten these cow-like creatures, doing in a highly energy-intensive way the very thing that 150 years ago nature managed beautifully and even more bountifully, without spoiling the ground water, without polluting the air, without contaminating the soil, without exhausting the world's energy supplies formed over millions of years and used up in an eye-wink, a fraction of a second, on the scale of the world's time. We call this progress.

No wind or solar power

If there ever is a nation hooked on energy use, it is the United States. In Canada I live in an area where I hardly ever hear a power tool. In this Iowa small town it seems to me – granted I was there for only a few days – that people only move about either in or with a motorized power tool.

If ever there were to come an energy shortage and fuel had to be rationed and electricity apportioned for essential tasks only, its economy would fall apart, based as it is on unlimited consumption. So would we in Canada, of course, but fortunately we are not nearly as rich, or have as many toys.

Here, where there always is a stiff breeze, ideal for wind-power, I did not spot one wind generator. Here, where there often is abundant sunshine, I did not see one solar panel. There is no way that this country can function without cheap and abundant energy.

Radio prophets

I know my views are colored – I am sure they are – but when I read in the regional newspaper that Saudi Arabia is hedging whether it will increase its oil production, then the writings of Mr. Matthew Simmons come to mind. *The* expert on Oil Reserves, he has made a special study on what resources may be left in the Middle East and has concluded that we live on the edge of a knife, that the Saudis no longer have a cushion and that the world will soon reach the peak of oil production.

When I was driving from St. Paul, Minnesota, to Iowa, I listened to NPR, that excellent National Public Radio system, mostly privately financed. A fellow prophesied that prosperity would increase and that even better times are ahead. He painted a picture of lower prices and greater employment.

This could well be true, if we find many more untapped oil fields, if we manage to control Climate Change, if we learn to live in peace without deeply destructive wars.

I don't know what to think of this all. Are these people right and am I wrong? Are there really no clouds on the horizon and will the future simply be an extension of the past. Even more so?

World War II

On June 6, for one day, the Second World War pushed the current war in Iraq and even the war on terror off the front page. That war was a just war. I know. I was one of the millions liberated by Canadian Forces from a tyranny that saw several of my relatives placed in concentration camps, one of them my older brother who returned a skeleton of some 90 pounds, but otherwise healthy.

It ended for the simple reason that both the Germans and the Japanese a few months later had the stuffing knocked out of them. I remember how many a night thousands of bombers would drone over our heads on their way to Hamburg and Berlin, unloading their deadly cargo. Not only were millions of young men killed in battle, hundreds of thousands of their women and children also were burned to a crisp by so-called strategic bombing.

War isn't fun when you are on the receiving end. America tends to forget that, having been spared open warfare on their block, now traumatized by one event. The result of the 1940-45 conflict was that two highly disciplined and law-abiding populations were crushed.

War always has an aftermath. Even now, almost 90 years after World War One, live ammunition is still found in France and Belgium. Some areas are still out of bounds. Farmers still plow up bones from "Unknown Soldiers" in the fields of Flanders.

On Armistice night, November 11, 1918, Lloyd George, leaving the House of Commons with Winston Churchill, remarked: "The war of the giants is over. The war of the pygmies is about to begin." The pygmies, in civil wars in Germany, Hungary, Poland, the Baltic states, Finland and above all Russia, went on fighting for years, killing or starving to death millions. A full-blown war of conquest by Greece against Turkey ended in a Greek humiliation but also 300,000 deaths.

On May 5, 1945 the big guns went silent and massive bombing ended in Europe, but the Second World War did not end neatly in other parts of the world. In Greece, the guerrilla war against the Germans became a civil war which lasted until 1949 and killed 150,000 people. Peace never came to Japanese-occupied Asia. In China, Vietnam, and Indonesia the Second World War was followed by struggles for national liberation, lasting years and killing many more millions. In Burma, the civil war persists to this day.

Middle East witch's brew

And now we have Iraq. It too will have an aftermath. What will it be? The American occupation keeps on fueling Iraqi nationalism, spurred by political confusion, US heavy-handedness and civilian casualties. The longer the occupation continues, the more powerful the nationalist reaction will become, driving even Iraqis sympathizing with America's goals of freedom and democracy to side with the resistance.

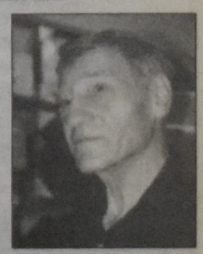
The idea that the presence of American forces stabilizes Iraq is an illusion. The opposite is true: American forces destabilize Iraq – as Iraqis themselves keep trying to explain to Americans. This will probably get worse when on June 30 "sovereignty" is handed over. Even though the United States says that it will do this unconditionally, and its forces will leave if the Iraqis ask them to, this will not happen. The USA has invested too much in lives, money and prestige to abruptly abandon the country. It will insist on getting its money worth, will want to retain an economic advantage in Iraq, dominate the use of Iraq's resources, and maintain its military bases.

If the lessons of previous wars mean anything, the aftermath of the Iraqi war will be continuous warfare, spilling over into the entire Middle East region, especially Saudi Arabia. Oil costs $40 a barrel because of fears that Saudi oil could come off the market, combined with the possibility that the Saudis are already pumping at near or full capacity.

Another danger is an Iranian-underwritten uprising in southern Iraq that spills over into Saudi Arabia, where terrorists are increasingly active, thanks to popular support. No wonder. While most of the Saudis have seen their income reduced by half, the 15,000 princes cream off 40 percent of the oil revenue, now richer than ever. My younger brother worked for years in Saudi Arabia. One time one of the princes wanted to spend a weekend in Paris and asked him whether $80,000 was enough to have a good time.

Saudi's restless populace is also an American problem. The US needs the oil. The Saudi royalty needs dollars to waste on fast women and horses. A Saudi collapse spells an American collapse as well.

Wars are very complicated undertakings that require very simple politics. In World War II Hitler was the bad guy. In the conflict with the Soviets, Stalin was Satan. The Middle East is not that easily labelled. It is a very complicated region, where religion and oil and tribal strife and lack of democratic regimes all create a carpet of complexity. Who are friends? Who are foes? The politics of this war are simply mind-boggling. Mix in a pinch of al Qaeda and we have a witch's brew that keeps on fermenting and boiling well beyond the Pentagon's competence to cope. How the US will extricate itself from this self-induced mess without major loss of face is something the entire world will watch with fascination but also with increasing concern.



Bert Hielema lives in Tweed, Ontario. His website has been updated, now including all past columns as well as other writings: www.geocities.com/hielemab

the Netherlands
ALL THE NEWS AND MUCH MORE...
the Windmill Herald
Only $27.50 per year
Published twice per month.
Ask for a trial copy.
Canada: P.O. Box 3006, Stn. LCD1, Langley, BC V3A 4R3
USA: P.O. Box 313, Lynden, WA 98264-0313
Phone: 1-800-881-0705 fax: (604) 532-1734
email: windmill@godutch.com
Internet: www.godutch.com
Ask for a copy of the Dutch Heritage Pages book catalogue.

Classifieds

THE BACK TO GOD HOUR

3475 Mainway PO Box 5070 Stn LCD1 Burlington ON L7R 3Y8

Radio- From Coast to Coast Web:www.backtogod.net/

BRITISH COLUMBIA

Burns Lake – CFLD	9:15 am	1400
Osoyoos – CJOR	8:00 am	1490
Penticton – CKOR	8:00 am	800
Port Alberni – CJAV	7:00 pm	1240
Prince George – CIRX	7:00 am	94.3
Princeton – CHOR	8:00 am	1400
Smithers – CFBV	9:15 am	1230
Summerland – CHOR	8:00 am	1450
Vernon – CJIB	9:30 pm	94

ALBERTA

Brooks – CIBQ	8:30 am	1340
Ft. McMurray – CJOK	8:30 am	1230
High River – CHRB	6:30 pm	1140
Edmonton – CJCA	6:00 pm	930
Westlock – CFOK	7:30 am	1370

SASKATCHEWAN

Estevan – CJSL	8:00 am	1280
Weyburn – CFSL	8:00 am	1190

MANITOBA

Altona – CFAM	9:30 am	950
Steinbach – CHSM	9:30 am	1250
Winnipeg – CKJS	9:00 am	810

ONTARIO

Atikokan – CFAK	9:30 am	1240
Chatham – CFCO	6:30 am	630
Guelph – CJOY	8:30 am	1460
Hamilton – CHAM	7:30 am	820
Kapuskasing – CKAP	7:00 am	580
London – CKSL	7:00 am	1410
Oshawa – CKDO	8:00 am	1350
Owen Sound – CFOS	7:00 am	560
Pembroke – CHVR	10:00 am	96.7
Sarnia – CHOK	7:30 am	1070
Stratford – CJCS	8:45 am	1240
Tilsonburg – CKOT	9:02 am	101.3
Windsor – CKLW	7:30 am	800
Wingham – CKNX	10:30 am	920
Woodstock – CJFH	7:30 am	94.03

NEW BRUNSWICK

Saint John – CHSJ	9:00 am	94.1

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

Charlottetown – CFCY	7:00 am	630

NOVA SCOTIA

Bridgewater – CKBW	7:30 am	1000
Digby – CKDY	6:00 am	1420
Halifax – CFDR	8:30 am	780
Liverpool – CKBW	7:30 am	94.5
Kentville – CKEN	8:30 am	1490
Middleton – CKAD	8:30 am	1350
New Glasgow – CKEC	7:30 am	1320
Shelburne – CKBW	7:30 am	93.1
Sydney – CJCB	7:00 am	1270
Weymouth – CKDY	8:30 am	103.1
Windsor – CFAB	8:30 am	1450

TELEVISION *Primary Focus*

ON CTS Sat. - 7:30pm

AB Lethbridge - CJIL Thurs.- 9:00pm

Kids Corner Radio

AB - **Drayton Valley** - CIBW 8:30 am Sun. 92.9 FM
Nordegg - CHBW 8:30 am Sun. 93.9 FM
Rocky Mtn. House - CHBW 8:30am Sun. 94.5 FM
MB - **Altona** - CFAM 4 pm Sun. **Estevan** - CJSL - 7am Sun.
Steinbach - CHSM 4 pm Sun **Weyburn** - CJSL - 7am Sun.
BC - **Prince Rupert** - CJRN 10 am Sat. 100.7 FM ***ON*** - **Woodstock** - CJFH 8am Sat.

BOND INVESTMENTS

We presently offer

Royal Bank prime plus one percent

for instance, on June 7, 2004, Elim paid

4.75% p.a.

Call 604-583-3546 today for more information

The interest earned will fluctuate during the five-year term as the Royal Bank prime rate fluctuates and could pay up to 7% p.a.

This is not to be construed as an offer to solicit investments and no investment can be made until the investor has received an Information Statement issued by Elim Housing Society.

Investments can be made within an RRSP or RIF. Shorter term investments are also available.

About Us

Elim Village is located on 20 acres in the heart of Surrey's Fleetwood area. Operated by Elim Housing Society, a non-profit organization, Elim Village is a unique Christian retirement community. When fully developed it will be home to some 700 seniors and will offer a wide variety of housing and care options. More than 125 independent living apartments and duplexes are now completed. Construction is currently underway on 109 supportive and assisted living apartments, with a completion date mid 2005. Future plans call for an Amenity Building, Complex Care, and additional Apartments which the new Bonds will be used for.

ELIM

Elim Village

Christian Retirement Community

Visit our office! 9055 - 160 Street, Surrey, B.C. V4N 2X7

604-583-3546

www.elimvillage.com

ROSS & McBRIDE LAW FIRM

DAVID A. VAN DER WOERD

Commerce Place, 1 King St. West

Mail: P.O. Box 907 Hamilton, ON L8N 3P6

Phone: 905-526-9800 **Fax:** 905-526-0732 **Direct:** 905-572-5803

Email: dvanderwoerd@rossmcbride.com

Wanted

Bible commentary of Patrick, Polus and Wells or a **Calvin commentary.** Email to ejbosch@rdnet.nl

BUSINESS and SERVICE DIRECTORY

Ontario Plywood Specialties (1987) ltd

- PLYWOOD
- PANELLING
- TRIM
- MOULDINGS
- DOORS

257 Cent. Pkwy N Hamilton, ON L8E 2X3
John Ouwehand • Syd Grypstra
Ph: 905-561-3576 Fax: 905-561-3581

MISSISSAUGA-OAKVILLE

GEORGE KLOET
gkloet@idirect.com

PAULINE SCHURINGA
pschuringa@trebnet.com

RE/MAX

HALL OF FAME

REALTY ENTERPRISES INC
1697 Lakeshore Road
Mississauga, ON L5J 1J4
905-855-2200

DUTCH TOKO
European Imports

118 Wyndham St. N. Guelph
519-822-4690
Mountain Plaza Mall, Hamilton
905-383-2981

970 Bonnieview Ave
Burlington, ON L7T 1T5

CANADIAN CHRISTIAN BUSINESS FEDERATION CCBF

Ph: 905-522-8602
Fax 905-524-1203

J Hans Vander Stoep Executive Director
jvstoep@ccbf.org
CCBF activities listed on our Web-site
www.ccbf.org

Hulse & English

Funeral Home

75 Church St. St. Catharines
905-684-6346 - 24 Hours

IAN H. RUSSELL
DAVID WALPOLE - Managing Director
Serving the community for 151 years

Barry VanZoeren, C.A.I.B.
Registered Insurance Broker

Belleville	Trenton
Ph: 613-968-4576	Ph: 613-965-1993
Fax: 613-968-3356	Fax:613-965-1252

Albert VanReewyk Insurance Brokers Limited

409 Dundas St. W.	499 Dundas St. W.
Belleville, Ontario	Trenton, Ontario
K8P 1B6	K5V6C4

Certified Management Accountant
GARY VAN EYK, CMA

GVE

50 Lakeport Rd. Suite201
St. Catharines
ON L2N 4P7

Email: garyvaneyk@bellnet.ca
Bus: 905-646-7331 Fx: 905-646-095

ADA REALTY LTD.

Sid Vandermeulen

Suite 404, 2011-137 Ave.
Edmonton AB T5A 4W2
Tel: 780-473-8149

RAMAKERS IMPORTS

We specialize in
DUTCH FOOD/CHEESE/CHOCOLATE/
TEXTILES & GIFTS

579 Ontario St. St. Catharines
Ontario L2N 4N8 Fax: 905-934-3344
Tel: 905-934-6454
E-mail: linder@vaxxine.com
Order on-line: www.vaxxine.com/linder

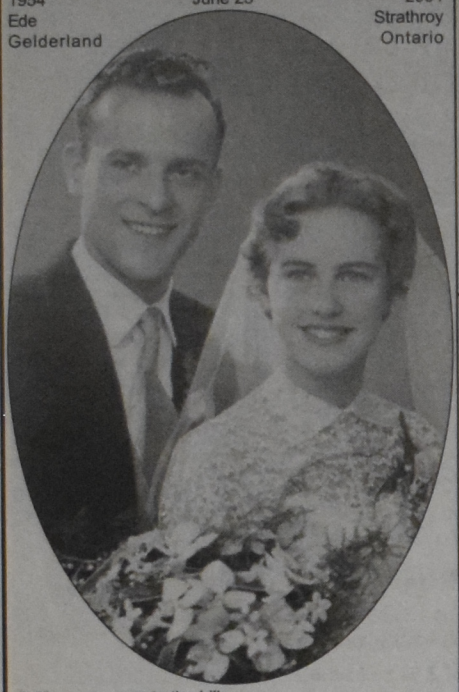
RESERVED FOR YOUR BUSINESS!!

Only $25.00. Run your ad monthly, or prehaps every issue.
Check out our website:
www.christiancourier.ca
for issue dates and deadlines.
Call us at **905-682-8311** or
email: ads@christiancourier.ca

Classifieds

Anniversaries

1954 June 23 2004
Ede Strathroy
Gelderland Ontario



"I lift up my eyes to the hills –
where does my help come from?
My help comes from the Lord,
the maker of heaven and earth." Psalm 121:1-2

We give thanks and rejoice
with our parents and grandparents

PIETER AND INEKE PLAISIER (nee **Tulp**)

on the occasion of their **50th Wedding Anniversary**

May you continue to be uplifted by His care and love each day.
Congratulations and love from your children and grandchildren.

Peggy & Marvin DeVries, *Mt. Brydges, ON*
Carla (& Brandon), Ryan, Justin, Michael
Marijke & Elzo Tenyenhuis, *Kincardine, ON*
Jeanette (& Dan), *Kitchener, ON*
Elizabeth (& Kevin), *Michigan, USA*
Mike & Helen Plaisier, *Dorchester, ON*
Christina, Peter, Julie
Henriette & Gordon Snieder, *Sarnia, ON*
Timothy, Angela, Everet
Yvonne & Sam Linton, *California, USA*
Kyle, Nico

Address: 241 Millpond Cres, Strathroy ON N7G 3P9

1954 June 18 2004
Brantford Dunnville

"May your unfailing love rest upon us, O Lord,
even as we put our hope in you." Psalm 33:22

With joy and thankfulness to the Lord, we announce
the **50th Wedding Anniversary** of our parents

GEORGE AND ANN EYGENRAAM (nee **Hamstra**)

May the Lord bless you
as you continue to bless us and others.

Rob Eygenraam, *Grand Rapids, MI*
Josh, Ruth-Ann, Rachel, Joel
Judy Downer, *Toronto*
Evonne, Tia, Kevyn
David & Henrietta Eygenraam, *Beamsville*
Aaron, Jesse, Timothy, James
Irene & Ed Pypker, *Rockwood*
Steve, Rosalie, Sarah, Anna
Michael & Margriet Eygenraam, *Brampton*
Nicole, Trevor
Ian & Marjonne Eygenraam, *Strathmore, AB*
Jared, Alexandra, Andrew

Come celebrate together with us at an **Open House**
on Saturday, June 26 from 2 - 4 p.m.
at Bethel CRC, 17 Robinson Rd. Dunnville ON.
Best wishes only.

Address:1015 Robinson Rd, RR1 Dunnville ON N1A 2W1

1954 July 3 2004

With thankfulness to God, we are pleased to
announce the **50th Wedding Anniversary**
of our dear parents and grandparents.

FREDERIK AND MARTINA DROK (nee **Vermey**)

Mom and Dad, we pray that
the Lord will continue to bless
and keep you in his loving care.
With all our love,
Dave & Belinda – Kristen, Rachelle

Address: 4998 DeMaissoneauve Blvd. Apt: 619
Montreal (Westmount) Quebec H3Z 1N2

Great is Thy Faithfulness

1964 - 2004

REV. PETER AND JENNY BREEDVELD

With thankfulness and praise to the Lord,
we invite you to celebrate our parents'
40th Wedding Anniversary.

An **Open House** will be held at the
Ottewell CRC, Edmonton, Alberta
July 24th 2004
2:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.

John & Nanda –Janelle, Christine, Leah, Allison, Katie
Margaret & Irving – Jillian, Wesley, Jenna
Arnold & Sharon – Stephen, Melinda, Nicole
Peter
Edward (with the Lord)

Address: 9224 Ottewell Rd NW
Edmonton AB T6B 2C7

"All we have needed, Your Hand has provided"

Issue dates for the summer

July 5, August 2, August 16, August 30

Please have ads in two weeks
before the issue date.

1954 June 23 2004

With gratitude to God for his
indispensable blessings and faithfulness
our parents

RAY AND HELEN VANDER PLOEG

hope to celebrate their
50th Wedding Anniversary with an
Open House on July 17, 2 - 4 p.m. at the
Maranatha CRC of Woodstock, ON

Joyce Cunningham (& Bob), *Hamilton, ON*
Stewart (deceased 1988)
Anita & Rick Klaver, *St. Thomas, ON*
Jeffrey, *Abbotsford, BC*
Jane & Gerard Kuntz, *St. Catharines, ON*
Colin & Anita, *Abbotsford, BC*
Gary & Angel, *East Liverpool, Ohio*
11 grandchildren and 7 step-grandchildren

Address: 37 Brick Pond Lane
Woodstock ON N4V 1G1

1954 August 17 2004

ANN AND JOHN STEGGERDA

with our children
and grandchildren
will remember and celebrate
our **50 years of marriage**

Please join us for an
Open house
on Saturday
August 28, 2004 DV
at the
Lighthouse Restaurant
2340 Ontario Street
Oakville L6L 6P7
905 827 7037
From 2 to 4 p.m.

Home address:
2455 Belyea Street
Oakville ON L6L 1P2

"Give thanks to God, for he is good,
His love endures forever."

50th Wedding Anniversary

JOHAN AND NEL SCHIPPER

July 3, 1954 - July 3, 2004

Children: Freda & Johan Loeve
John & Frances Schipper
Cathy & Irik Mallie
and 11 grandchildren

Address: 104 - 9010 - 158 St,
Surrey BC V4N 5G4

Obituaries

Den Haag, The Netherlands Georgetown, ON
April 21, 1932 May 24 2004

Psalm 91:1
"He who dwells in the shelter of the Most
High will rest in the shadow of the Almighty."

In his infinite wisdom, the Lord took to his
eternal home

HENK VANDERBURGH

Devoted husband for 50 years of
Mary (Knetsch) Vanderburgh.
Loving father of
Marilyn & Tom Konyndyk
Jerry & Diane Vanderburgh
Milly & Harry Roffel
John & Marlene Vanderburgh
Patti & Rod Van Rys
Much loved Opa of 22 grandchildren
and 2 great-grandchildren.
Beloved brother, brother-in-law, uncle
and friend to many.

Address: Mrs Mary Vanderburgh
4 Chapel Street Unit 410
Georgetown ON L7G 6A7

Opperdoes, Netherlands Brampton, Ontario
September 4, 1923 May 19, 2004

Psalm 121

Peacefully on Wednesday, May 19, 2004
the Lord took home our much loved
Mother, Oma and Great-Oma

ANDREA BARTEN (nee **Vijn**)

Widow of Gerrit since November 2002.
Predeceased by her grandson David
(1998), four sisters and five brothers.

She will be greatly missed and will be
remembered with love by her children
and their families:
Betsy & Dick Braam, *Georgetown, ON*
Jason & Retisny - Evan, Emilia
Sarah & Josh deBoer
Ryan & Hannah - Zachary
Ann & Tony Bouma, *Calgary, AB*
Peter & Lori
Brian, Diana, Jaclyn, Monique, Mariesa
Klare & Maria Barten, *Guelph, ON*
Michelle & Bill Bronsema
Emma, Olivia, Liam
Jeff & Rose - Jenna
Karen, David (†), Julie
Jacqueline Barten, *Mississauga, ON*
Also survived by one brother in the
Netherlands.

Memorial service was held on
Saturday, May 22, 2004 in Second
Christian Reformed Church, Brampton
with Rev. Dirk Evans presiding.

"To God be the Glory"

Address: 146 Main Street South
Georgetown ON L7G 3E8

Gezocht

FAM. WIEBE DE BOER
Jellie v d Naald uit Doezum
Nederland zoekt fam. Wiebe de
Boer. Geemigreerd in 1952 naar
Toronto. Kinderen: Jantje-Siebrand-
Nanno-Auke-Feikje en Corrie.
Telefoon: **0594-659163**

Classifieds/ Advertising

For Rent

ROOMS FOR RENT at a private Christian home Sept. 2004 school term at the University of Waterloo and Wilfred Laurier. Call **519 746 6344.**

Furnished room for rent in Christian family in home in **Brampton** (Bramalea). Suitable for single female. Includes: own parking space, shared laundry, 4 pc. bath, own kitchen area, heat (air in summer), hydro & water. Phone (internet), and cable not included. Personal reference required.

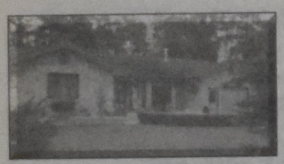
Please contact Tracey Geerlinks for more info. at **905-791-7644** or **dtgeer@idirect.com**

Bed & Breakfast

INGERSOLL ON
Lil' Bit Country
Guest Suite B&B

An elegant air conditioned private entrance suite with 900 sq. ft. of personal space. Includes a private 3 pce. bath, personal kitchenette, queen size bed & cots, large entertainment room with gas fireplace. Join us for an evening visit or a served breakfast in our dining room at 8:30 a.m. Centrally located in SW Ontario near London. Ideal for tourists, travellers or vacationers in the area, easy access to main highways and numerous tourist attractions. Reduced rates for a Multi-Night stay. We look forward to greeting you!

Nico & Alice Jukema,
PH:519-485-2101
Fax: 519-485-2103
email: jukema@lilbitcountry.ca
web: www.lilbitcountry.ca



Vacation

Anyone vacationing in **Victoria**, B.C. during the months of July and August, I have a large one bedroom **condo for rent**, weekly 250.00 and 800.00 monthy. It is completely furnished, all appliances. Utilities are included as well as internet, cable and phone. Ideal location walking distance to village and hospital. Call **(250) 370-9629** until June 29th, after that **(250)598-4241**

Seeking Employment

Redeemer University Graduate (2004) **Business Major** seeks challenging employment opportunity in the Hamilton, Toronto, St Catharine's area.

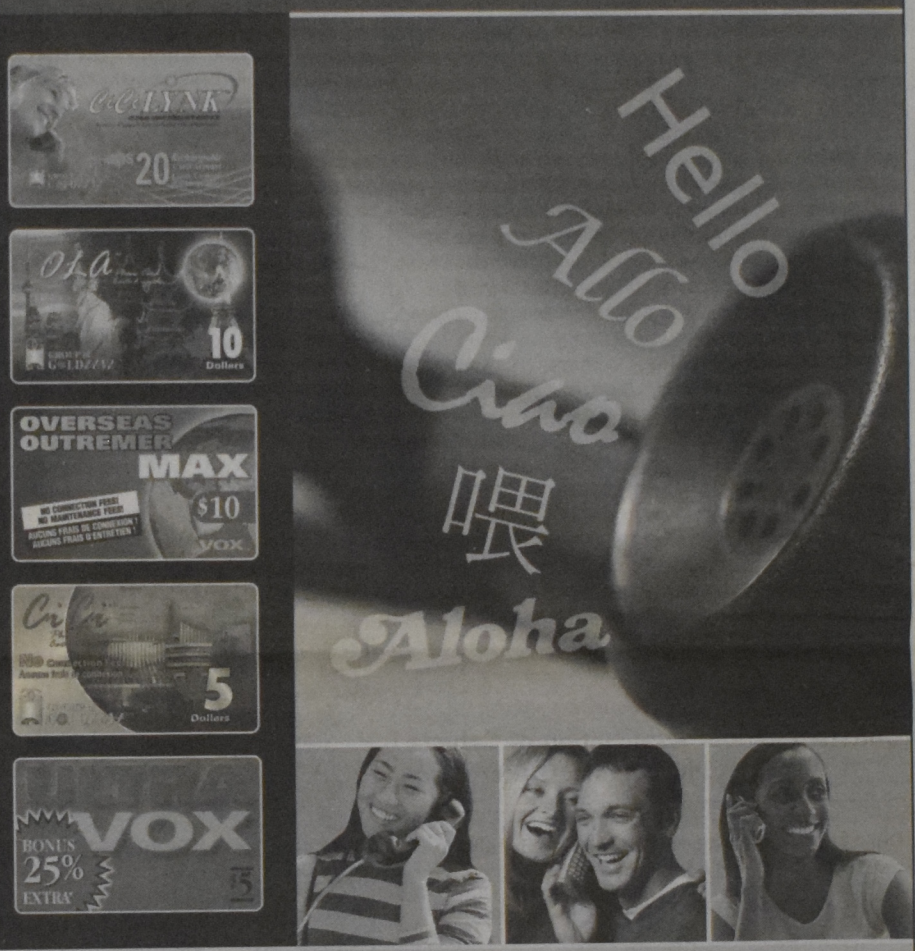
Can be contacted at **519 677 4073**, Fax 519 627 6922. Ask for Michael.

Announcing the Opening of

Jeanne's Piano Studio

LESSONS FOR ALL AGES
Instructor: Jeanne te Sligte
Glendale/Glenridge Area
St. Catharines
905-688-9260

Get the card that gets the world talking



Stay connected with international phone cards.

- Competitive rates to over 250 countries
- Prepaid denominations of $5, $10 and $20

NOW AVAILABLE at a participating Post Office near you.

CANADA POST / POSTES CANADA

From anywhere... to anyone

LITTLE EUROPE RESORT AND TRAILER PARK

Bracebridge, Muskoka

Plan a successful vacation at our resort known for it's Dutch Hospitality. Reasonable rates for **cottage rentals**. Excellent for **camping, swimming** and **fishing** (ideal for group camping). Showers available. "Little Europe" is located 10 km. east of Hwy 11 on Hwy 118 East, past the Muskoka Airport.

Roel & Riet Bakema Phone: 705-645-2738
Little Europe Resort
RR 3, Bracebridge ON P1L 1X1
No pets please

A **charitable** gift **annuity** offers:

REDEEMER University College

- the peace of mind of a guaranteed lifetime income, largely tax free
- the satisfaction of knowing that you will be providing a future gift for Redeemer University College

Rates of return for those over 65 range from 7% to 10%.
Please contact us for your own confidential, no-obligation quote.
Information available on other gift-planning options as well.

CSS

Redeemer University College
777 Garner Road East, Ancaster, Ontario L9K 1J4
905-648-2131 ext. 4205 (Ben) stewardship@redeemer.on.ca

Radio in het Nederlands
Sat. morning CJMR 1320 AM & 710 AM 8.00 - 8.30 am
'Zingend geloven'
8.30 - 9.30 am
' The Dutch Touch'
Holland Calling :
CFRC 101.9 FM Kingston Ont.
9.00 am Saturday mornings
CJLX 92.3 FM Belleville Ont.
7.30 pm Sunday nights

Classifieds / Job Opportunities

MARANATHA CRC

of Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada,
a congregation of 480 members, is seeking
an

ASSOCIATE/YOUTH PASTOR.

This individual would be an ordained minister,experienced with youth, willing to lead our church and community outreach church programs with hands-on involvement. For a detailed job description, or more information, contact
Frank deWalle, Search Committee Chairman.
e-mail: adewalle@telusplanet.net.

ALLISTON CRC OF ALLISTON ONTARIO

in the heart of potato country is looking for a **pastor** ready to take on the challenge of pastoring our congregation in a fast-growing community. We are a congregation of 83 families, close to Toronto but far enough away to still maintain our small town flavour. We have several thriving ministries and are involved in our community. Inquiries can be made to:

John Van Loenen 905-936-2550
chair of council, or
Aris DeBruin 705-435-5317
Chair of the Calling Committee

Christian Labour Association of Canada
Benefit Administration Office

Due to the continued growth of CLAC's benefit plans, the Grimsby Benefit Administration Office is currently seeking a candidate for the following full-time position:

Benefit Plan Administrator

The successful candidate will be a highly motivated self-starter and possess a degree in business administration or the equivalent. In addition, this individual will have excellent communication skills, both oral and written, as well as strong interpersonal skills. Preference will be given to those knowledgeable in the areas of finances, insurance and pension benefits. Knowledge of Microsoft Office (especially Word and Excel) and DataEase computer programs would be a definite asset. We offer a competitive salary and benefit package.

Applications should be addressed to:

Peter Van Duyvenvoorde, General Manager
CLAC Benefit Administration Office
89 South Service Rd, PO Box 219
Grimsby ON L3M 4G3
Tel: (905) 945-1500
Fax: (905) 945-7200
pvanduyvenvoorde@clac.ca

All applications will be held in confidence.

YOUTH DIRECTOR/HALF-TIME:

WANTED, a loyal servant, who is gifted in youth ministries and whose love for God and his people is present in his/her everyday walk. This self-motivated and enthusiastic person will use his/her gifts to direct, lead and motivate today's young people into tomorrow's leaders. This position at **ST. THOMAS FIRST CRC** will be available in July 2004. For further information, or to send your resumé, contact:

First CRC PO Box 22039, 204 First Ave,
St. Thomas ON N5R 6A1
or email: **firstcrcstthomas@canada.com.**

The board of trustees of
Christian Reformed Huron Campus Ministry –
Guelph, ON
is seeking a

campus minister

to serve the University of Guelph community beginning in the spring of 2005.

Candidates may be ordained or non-ordained, should possess a graduate degree or equivalent experience, and have a passion to engage people in contemporary culture from a Reformed theological perspective.

Application deadline is Sept. 3, 2004.

For a position description or further information, or to apply by submitting a curriculum vitae and two letters of reference, contact:

Huron Campus Ministry – Guelph, Keith Knight
26 Blueridge Court, Guelph ON N1H 6S6.
E-mail: kknight@presbyterian.ca

HOMESTEAD
CHRISTIAN CARE

Job opportunity

Position: **DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION**

Duties:

Training of staff, care givers, volunteers
Education/publications on Mental Illness
Expanding capacity of Communities to care for individuals with a Mental Illness

Qualifications:

Post graduate certification in area of Psycho-Social Rehabilitation
Minimum of 10 years practical Community psychiatric rehabilitation experience
Evidence of community involvement including community development, advocacy, teaching, and volunteering in the area of mental illness
Previous professional publications
A Reformed Christian worldlife perspective

Interested applicants should apply in writing to:

Homestead Christian Care
Unit A - 249 Caroline St S.
Hamilton, ON L8P 3L6

Thank you for your interest. Only those chosen for an interview will be contacted. No telephone or email inquiries please.

Application deadline: June 30, 2004

EMMANUEL HOME

an expanding Christian Assisted Living Residence for Seniors in Edmonton, Alberta
is seeking a **half-time Chaplain**

to facilitate the spiritual nurturing of residents and their families, and staff. [This half time position has the potential of growing with the upcoming expansion of the Home.] Responsibilities include developing a true community of caring as well as directing spiritual care. Qualifications include having a love for Jesus and for seniors, excellent leadership skills, the ability to understand Dutch, and being a team player. Education requirements include a post-secondary degree; chaplaincy training at an advanced level is preferred. Job description available on request. Please send inquiries to Vicky Van Andel at

vanandel@emmanuelhome.ab.ca
or by fax to 1-780-473-0970.

OTTAWA CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

is seeking qualified applicants for possible and definite openings in the following areas:

JK and art maternity leave position commencing in the fall of 2004.
Grades 1-6 music commencing in September 2004.
Primary French (JK – Grade 4)

If you love Christ and his children, have an Ontario Teacher's Certificate, a Christian School Teacher's Certificate or their equivalents, are interested in being part of a dynamic team of educators, and are qualified for any one or combination of the above openings we look forward to hearing from you.

Please send your resume and a statement of faith to:

Paul Triemstra, Principal
Ottawa Christian School
2191 Benjamin Ave.
Ottawa, Ontario K2A 1P6

Tel: (613) 722-5836
Fax: (613) 722-5836
Email: paul@ocschool.org
Website: www.ocschool.org

Low interest rates getting you down?

If you're over 65, have you considered a **charitable gift annuity**?

- Wonderful income - as high as 10%
- Largely tax exempt
- An immediate charitable receipt for at least 20% of the annuity amount.
- This lasts as long as you live
- Worry free
- Benefits the charities of your choice

Never heard of a gift annuity? Call for a no-obligation quotation or have a child or grandchildren call on your behalf.

LinkCharity Canada Inc.
45 Harriet St.
Toronto M4L 2G1
Ph: 416-410-4244
Fax: 416-465-6367
www.linkcharity.ca Email: info@linkcharity.ca

Please note *Christian Courier's* issue dates for the summer
July 5, Aug.2, Aug. 16, Aug. 30

Advertising

YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE LIBERAL TO BE CANADIAN.

"I believe in a Canada that rewards hard work, respects taxpayers, and helps those in need. I believe in a government that is accountable and works for the interests of all Canadians."

Stephen Harper

In fact, the values of Stephen Harper and the new Conservatives are very similar to your own.

When Paul Martin and the Liberals wanted to decriminalize marijuana without providing the tools that law enforcement needed to monitor impairment,
Stephen Harper said "NO"

When Paul Martin and the Liberals wanted to sidestep the democratic process on same sex marriage without a vote in Parliament,
Stephen Harper said "NO"

When Paul Martin and the Liberals supported Svend Robinson's Bill C-250 to restrict freedom of speech,
Stephen Harper said "NO"

Stephen Harper and the Conservative Party have always stood up for Family Values and will continue to do so.

NOW IT'S YOUR TURN TO STAND UP FOR WHAT YOU BELIEVE – SAY "NO" TO PAUL MARTIN'S LIBERALS' AND "YES" TO A BETTER CANADA.

ON JUNE 28th, VOTE CONSERVATIVE.

Demand Better vote *Conservative*

www.conservative.ca

Authorized by the Registered Agent of the Conservative Party of Canada

Events/Advertising

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

June 26, 27 Fellowship CRC in **Brighton**, Ont. will be celebrating 25 years of God's faithfulness. A special service will be held on Sunday. For more information please call 613-475-3836

June 26, 27 Retirement events for Henry Boehm, at John Calvin CRC, **Truro**, NS. For more info: 902-895-3540 or rachelboehm@ns.sympatico.ca (See ad, May 24 issue)

June 27 Heritage Service, Zion CRC, 409 Adelaide Ave. E. (at Central Park), **Oshawa** at 3:00 pm. Rev. John Veenstra, "De hemelvaart van Christus." A Social hour will follow the service.

July 1 Frisian Picnic, 11a.m. at the Pinehurst Conservation Park, **Paris**, Ont., Highway 24A

July 1,2,3 The Granum Christian Reformed Church, **Granum**, Alberta, will celebrate its 100 year anniversary. See ad this issue for details and contact information.

THE GRANUM CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH

will celebrate a "100 years of God's Grace"
July 1 -3, 2005.

All former members and friends are invited to come and celebrate with us. Some of the Festivities planned are as follows;
Friday, July 1- Combined Church Picnic With Nobleford.
Saturday, July 2- Banquet and Program.
Sunday July 3- Worship Services: Speaker: Rev. David Feddes
For more information please contact: Clara at (403) 687 - 2131 or Patty at (403) 687 - 2144 or: Granum CRC, Box 245 Granum AB T0L 1A0 or: granumcrc@hotmail.com
** Any church history submissions would be gratefully accepted at the above addresses.*

FRED HAGEN Realty

905-388-9555
33 Bellstone Lane
Mount Hope, Ontario L0R 1W0
Email: hagen@fredhagenrealty.com
www.fredhagenrealty.com
Fred Hagen
Broker

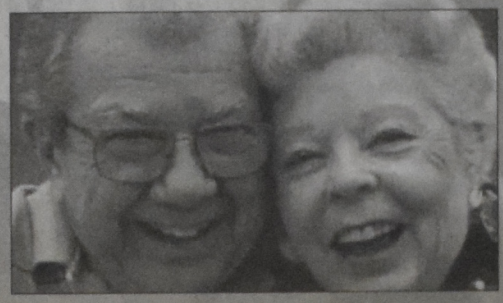
Providing personal professional real estate service for the Hamilton and surrounding areas.

Visiting Angels INC. ®

Home Health Care
Respite & Palliative care
Personal Hygiene & Bathing
Shopping
Housekeeping
Relief staffing

"Helping you care for your loved ones."
Call us **905-685-4242**

LIFE.
It's better at Evergreen Terrace



Thinking Condo? Think Again! You've worked hard, raised a family and own a good home.
Now you're retired and thinking condo or apartment. *Think again!*
Evergreen Terrace is the alternative for retirees 55 plus.

275 Main St. E. Grimsby
An exclusive 55 plus Christian Life Lease Community
Call 905.945.9208

Evergreen Terrace
www.evergreenterrace.ca

Arie Hoogerbrugge
Associate Broker
RE/MAX Del Mar Realty Inc.
860 Queenston Road
Stoney Creek, ON L8G 4A8
Bus: **905-662-5300**
Res: **905-945-3506**
E-mail: arie@remaxdelmar.com
Website: www.houseplus.com/ariehoogerbrugge

THE LIVING WORD
Sermons for reading services
This is the last year of the printed sermons.
For a supply of specially priced back copies contact:
R. Vander Ploeg,Secr./Treas
37 Brick Pond Lane,
Woodstock, On N4V 1G1
Phone: (519)-539-2117
Email:
rvanderploeg@execulink.com

Come BANK with us.

- **High Service/Low Fees**
- **Full Financial Services**
- **FREE Bonus Shares**

Main Branch & Head Office
Tel. (416) 223-8502
E-mail: duca.info@duca.com
Website: www.duca.com
DUCA Financial Services
your Credit Union!
Willowdale • Toronto • Rexdale • Etobicoke • Scarborough • Brampton
Orangeville • Richmond Hill • Newmarket • Whitby • Bowmanville • Burlington

FRISIAN PICNIC
Thursday,
July 1, 2004
Starting at 11 a.m.at
Pinehurst Conservation Park
Paris, Ont. on Highway 24A
(4 miles north of Paris)

DCA Travel & Cruise

•Holiday Packages
•Cruises•Flights

ON SALE
TORONTO 416-224-5211
BRADFORD 905-775-6763
Toll-free 1-800-667-2525
E-mail: info@dca-travel.com
Best insurance coverage-lowest price

"...excellent scholarship which is relevant culturally relevant."

-Ronald J. Sider, author, *Rich Christians In The Age of Hunger*

Minding The Future.

ICS
INSTITUTE FOR CHRISTIAN STUDIES
Christian Graduate Education
www.icscanada.edu

News

It was a long race – and she's still running

Rita Klein-Geltink and son

Ancaster, Ontario – It took her ten years, but at her graduation she received the highest award of her class.

Rita Klein-Geltink was awarded the Governor General's Academic Medal at the Redeemer University College Convocation held in Ancaster on May 29th. The award is given to the graduate with the highest standing in his or her class. Klein-Geltink is the first recipient of the award to have completed her entire program as a part-time student and is undoubtedly the first who never made the Dean's List (since part-time students are not eligible for that distinction.) The award has no monetary value but recognizes the person with the highest grade point average of the graduating class.

Klein-Geltink and her husband Gerald have four sons, two of whom are Redeemer graduates, one of whom graduated the same day as his mother. She began taking courses when she re-entered the work force in 1994 as an office clerk at Redeemer. She went on to become an executive assistant in the Office of the President and currently serves as the Director of Redeemer's $15 million capital campaign, "Growing with Integrity." Taking between two and five courses over the year during lunch breaks, in the evening and over the summer, Klein-Geltink balanced job and family responsibilities and still found time to be involved in her church and the local (Cambridge) Christian school.

She admits she is well organized and blessed with good health and a high energy level, but her prime motivators were her family's support and a strong faith that this was what God wanted her to do with her life.

"Gerald and the boys were very supportive in my doing this," she states, "and I've always felt called to use my gifts as a response to God's goodness to me. Both of those factors helped during the stressful times."

While she took courses toward her religion and theology major, Klein-Geltink prayed about the direction of her life and came to recognize a call to the ministry. She has been accepted into the M.Div. program at Calvin Theological Seminary for the fall, but will begin her studies at McMaster Divinity College in Hamilton while their fourth son begins his first year at Redeemer. She and Gerald then hope to complete a move to Grand Rapids, Michigan for her second year.

BBC program torpedoes Noah's Ark story

Cedric Pulford

London (ENI) – The great flood could not sink Noah's Ark, but BBC television has tried to do so by calling the well-loved biblical story "a great myth."

The story in Genesis (chapters 6 to 8) relates how Noah built a great wooden ark to preserve himself and his family, along with a male and female of each animal species, from a great flood sent by God, which destroyed the rest of humanity.

To carry its precious cargo of animals two by two, the ark would have been about 140 metres long, far beyond the technology of the time, it was argued in "Noah's Ark," a BBC television program shown in the UK. The ark would have been half the size of the Titanic, the liner that was hailed as a triumph of 20th century building expertise, but that sank in 1912 after ramming an iceberg.

"The traditional notion of the Noah story does not pass any sort of rational or historical test," asserted the narrator. "Maybe it was not meant to, maybe it was made up."

Internationally, however, the program faced the wrath of those Christians who believe in the literal truth of the Old Testament Noah story in the Bible.

About 60 per cent of Americans believe that the Genesis creation account, Noah's ark and a global flood, and Moses' parting of the Red Sea are "literally true," according to Richard Land of the Southern Baptist Convention, quoting an ABC news poll done in February.

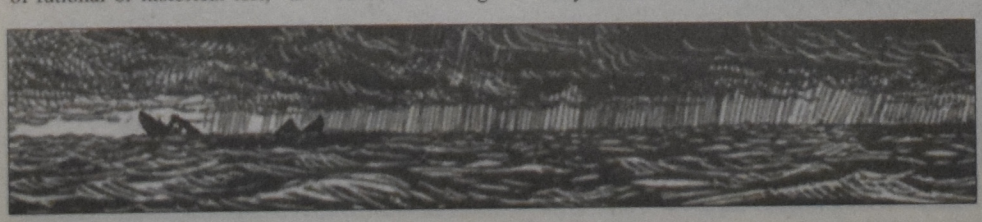
The BBC program interviewed experts who dismissed not only the ark but also the idea there had been a global flood. The earth simply does not have enough water, it was claimed.

The Bible is not alone in describing a great flood in early times. The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church mentions stories of such a deluge in Babylonian mythology, the legend of Deucalion in classical literature, and accounts of King Gilgamesh, who ruled a city in Sumeria (part of modern Iraq) during the third millennium BC.

"Noah's Ark" concludes that the likely origin of the Noah story is Gilgamesh, who was trapped on the River Euphrates by freak floods and survived by drinking the beer that he had been transporting. The epic of a Sumerian king who survived a massive flood is supported by clay tablets discovered in Iraq and by geological evidence for flooding at that period.

Jewish priests, on this view, recognized the moral force of the story and incorporated it into Genesis.

The BBC program said: "If humankind falls short of God's laws there's a dreadful price to pay. Behind that moral message lies one of the world's greatest stories." [Comment: *Forgotten, it seems, was the ending of the story: the rainbow and all it symbolizes.*]



Poison from puffer fish relieves pain in cancer patients

The poison from a fish called the puffer fish used in minute dosages can relieve pain for those suffering from cancer pains that other drugs can't relieve. The neurotoxin is going into the third phase of trials. A neurotoxin blocks nerves from sending pain signals to the brain.

The puffer fish toxin is so poisonous that it can paralyze and kill a person in a matter of minutes, but a small Canadian company has found a way to extract the active part of it so that it can be used safely to treat pain.

The puffer fish is served as a high-priced delicacy in Japan, but only specially trained chefs are allowed to serve it. If the fish isn't prepared properly and the toxin contaminates the meat, the unlucky diner will not live to digest his gourmet meal.

About 150 people will participate in the trial, one of the largest of its kind in Canada.

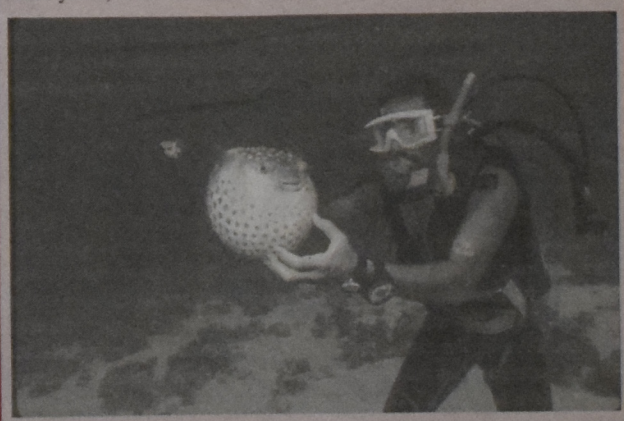
International Wex Technologies based in Vancouver has developed the pain killer, which was presented by the lead investigator, Dr. Neil Hagen, at the 2nd Joint Scientific Meeting of the American Pain Society and the Canadian Pain Society held in Vancouver, B.C, May 6-9, 2004.

The first phase trials showed that a shot of a few micrograms of the pain-killer caled Tectin can relieve hard-to-treat cancer pain for up to two weeks in some patients. The final results show that almost three-quarters of cancer pain patients experienced a significant decrease in pain.

The company said the drug differed from other painkillers in that it doesn't have the same side effects as morphine based drugs, doesn't interact with other medicines and is not addictive. It is up to 3200 times stronger than morphine.

Originally the drug was being tested to ease withdrawal symptoms for drug abusers. However, investigators noticed that it relieved such symptoms by blocking pain messages to the brain, so another use was discovered for the Tectin. Tetrodotoxin (its chemical name) was originally used by Japanese researchers in the 1930s for the treatment of migraines and menstrual cramps.

The company says the new drug could be on the market within three years, if all the tests work out.



valentine
a division of Merit Vacations
LAST MINUTE SELL OFF CHARTERS
BUS TOURS FROM HOLLAND WITH OAD BUSREIZEN
ALL INCLUSIVE VACATION PACKAGES
For all your travel needs, call:
Mississauga 905-890-5333 or 1-800-268-6144
London 519-472-2700 or 1-800-265-1141
TICO Registration #4499356